February / March 1995 $4.50

The Beaver

EXPLORING · CANADA'S · HISTORY

Gateway to Canada
Justice Goes North
A Craftsman of Old Toronto

The Beaver is Moving

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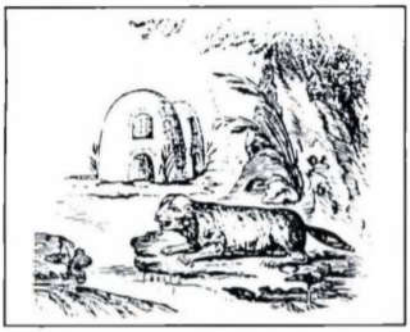

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Annals of *The Beaver*

When Douglas MacKay set about recreating *The Beaver* in 1933 he had few models from which to seek inspiration. Most company magazines, then as now, concentrated entirely on internal domestic matters that were of little interest to outsiders. *The Valve World* may have been keenly interesting to those involved in the plumbing business and other magazines may have appealed to the employees of insurance companies or the manufacturers of celluloid collars, but MacKay had something far more substantial in mind. The new "*Beaver*" would be a "company magazine", but it would be something more than that.

To begin with, the Hudson's Bay Company, the famous "Company of Adventurers", was not like other business firms. It existed to make a profit, to be sure, but it had a long and colourful history that was intimately connected to the development of the upper part of North America. The history of Canada was, in part, the history of the "Honourable Company" and while this great and often romantic past was there to be exploited, the unfolding story of the Company in the present was, in many respects, equally remarkable. History was being lived and made, day by day, at HBC posts in the North, on Company ships plying Northern waters and among the remarkable men and women who served the Company and the nation in the hinterland.

Somehow this story had to be told, but nobody was certain, at first, just how it could be done. P.A. Chester, the Company's General Manager, advised caution. Writing to MacKay from New York in May 1933 on his way home from a board meeting in London, Chester advised the editor that "It is to be a strictly HBC magazine. Consequently, we shall not be associated with other companies operating in the North, nor contain domestic news of such companies, but articles relating to the activities of such companies can be included in the magazine. A slow, careful start is to be made, as the Board is most anxious that you should not start off with a type of magazine which you would find it difficult, if not impossible, to maintain over a long period." In other words, don't spend too much money.

Who would read *The Beaver*? In 1933 there was no plan to make the magazine available to the general public, by subscription or through sale in shops. It

Douglas MacKay and his sons Shane and John.

would not be a commercial undertaking.

The new *"Beaver"*, in fact, would be an instrument of public relations. According to a MacKay memorandum of June 1933 the 8,000 quarterly copies of the magazine would be distributed to executives and senior employees of the HBC; to the Fur Trade; to public libraries and leading clubs; to friends of the Company and important customers; to executives of companies having an interest in the North; to newspaper and magazine editors throughout Canada and the United States, with permission to quote and with special inserts drawing attention to news matter and photographs available. Last, and certainly least, came "any employee of the Hudson's Bay Company who applies in writing for a one year's subscription — four issues."

The Beaver, according to the MacKay memorandum, "would carry from five to ten pages of advertising for our own branded lines", including "point" blankets, Trufli golf balls, Lady Hudson hose and Fort Garry tea and coffee. In later years MacKay's own children would appear tucked up in bed advertising "point" blankets. Quality was to be stressed. "It is to be kept in mind," MacKay wrote, "that the new *'Beaver'* will be as fine a piece of magazine making as we can produce. Everything will be done to make a compellingly good looking book that will 'sell' our Company as a whole and our own private brands."

By the end of August MacKay was writing to Company officials across the country, alerting them to the imminent arrival of the first issue of the refurbished magazine. "The people of your community are, of course, familiar with the store," he wrote. "The new *'Beaver'* is designed to broaden their knowledge of the Company's background, to remind our friends — and competitors — that the Hudson's Bay Company is, and always has been a vital part of the life of this country."

Throughout the 1930s *The Beaver* continued to attract favourable attention and its reputation grew. It was noticed that increasing numbers of "outsiders" were requesting subscriptions and that the magazine was more and more frequently quoted in the Canadian and the international Press. The magazine was making its mark serving the public relations needs of the Company — and yet *The Beaver* was something more than that. As Canadians looked to the North as the new frontier, *The Beaver* took on an importance unusual in a mere public relations journal. It was read and admired because it was informative, interesting, well produced and authoritative. Its value as a public relations instrument of the Company was great, but everybody realized that the PR value was really only "by the way". MacKay had produced something valuable and unique.

His tragic death in the 1938 plane crash came as a terrible blow. P.A. Chester, writing in the March 1938 issue of *The Beaver,* attempted to come to terms with the loss: "In the few years he was with us he made *The Beaver* 'the magazine of the North' as well as of the Hudson's Bay Company, and gave it a reputation that extended far beyond the limits of our own organization. Under his editorship the publication was an event." MacKay, Chester noted, had left a lasting memorial in his outstanding book *The Honourable Company.* "He was steeped in the Company and its history", Chester wrote, "but he related that history always to the present and to its modern activities."

Douglas MacKay

For a moment it seemed as if all the great work would come to nothing and that the magazine would die with the man, but the moment passed and the story continued to unfold. MacKay's widow, Alice, stepped into the breach and kept the magazine alive and flourishing until a new editor could be found.

With the new editor, Clifford Wilson, the Company got a bargain. Wilson was not only a distinguished writer and editor, but also an expert on museums. A frequent contributor to *The Beaver* during MacKay's editorship, Wilson had sojourned in Winnipeg in 1937 organizing the Company's famous museum display in the downtown store.

In 1939 he joined the Company as editor of *The Beaver,* Company historian and curator of the HBC museum. He would serve for 18 years and see the magazine grow and prosper. ◆

Judah Gershom Joseph: A Footprint on King St.

By PETER von BITTER

The John and Eustella Langdon Collection in the Canadiana Department of the Royal Ontario Museum contains 13 pieces of typical mid-nineteenth-century silver signed J.G.J. or J.G. Joseph. What is interesting about this silver is how little is known about its signer, Judah Gershom Joseph, also known as Judah George Joseph. Joseph was probably, like many immigrants to North America, reticent about revealing or recording personal details; the little information available about Joseph is scattered in three countries, on two continents, and is often contradictory. What is known is that he was a well-liked and respected member of early Toronto society; he is also regarded as Toronto's first permanent Jewish settler. His importance lies in his role in the commercial and religious life of early Toronto and in the fact that a diversity of items bearing his signature are increasingly coming to light.

Joseph was born in Exeter, England, in 1798. His early training may have included work under an optician or jeweller in Exeter; it is known that he received specialized training in instrument making — probably in Plymouth and possibly in the Channel Islands. By 1830 Joseph had emigrated to the United States, settling in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was listed in an 1831 city directory as a clerk to Jonas Levy. Subsequently, Joseph carried on a business in Cincinnati for some years as "Optician, Jeweller, Silversmith, Watch and Clockmaker". Things apparently did not go totally well for him and on losing most of his wealth — "the victim of false friends" — Joseph left the United States for Canada.

Joseph's actual date of arrival here is unclear. He may have relocated to Toronto as early as 1838; alternately, some sources indicate he may have first moved to Hamilton in 1840 and subsequently to Toronto in 1842. We do know that in 1843 Joseph advertised himself as a "Spectacle and Mathematical Instrument Maker" at 110 1/2 King Street in Toronto. He subsequently moved to 56 King Street East, advertising that he made and repaired a wide range of articles. He maintained this location until his death in 1857.

For historians and collectors, a helpful custom among skilled craftsmen such as silversmiths and scientific instrument makers was that they generally signed their wares. Known items signed by Joseph, although not numerous, are diverse and reflect the wide range of goods he may have made and that he advertised and sold. Joseph, the optician, is represented by a single set of silver spectacles signed J.G. Joseph, Toronto; the silversmith is documented by the silverware signed J.G.J. or J.G. Joseph. Jewellery, watches or clocks signed by Joseph are apparently not known. The only other category of known artifacts signed by Joseph are scientific

J. G. JOSEPH,

56, KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

CONSTANTLY ON HAND,

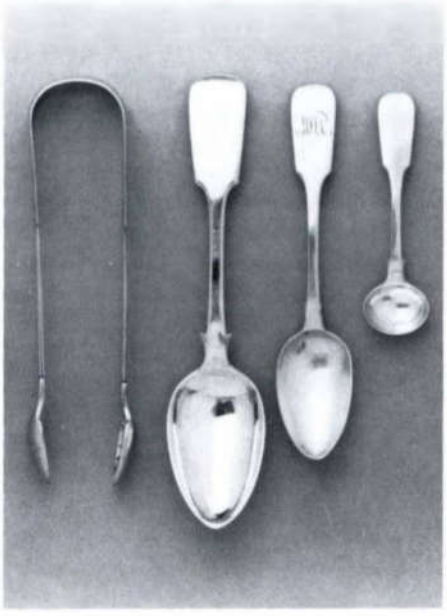
HYDROMETERS, SACCHROMETERS, BAROMETERS, and THERMOMETERS, TELESCOPES and MICROSCOPES, SPECTACLES to suit all sights, and a general assortment of THEODOLITES, TRANSITS, COMPASSES, DRAWING INSTRUMENTS, and SCALES. All the above articles made and repaired. Workmanship warranted.

instruments, such as the ivory thermometer backplate in its original case inscribed "J.G. Joseph, Toronto, C.W." (Canada West) and two brass surveying compasses, one signed "J.G. Joseph, Toronto C.W.", the other "J.G. Joseph, Toronto." Surveying compasses such as these were used in basic land surveys of much of Canada during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the example illustrated on page 7 belonged to, and was used by, William G. McGeorge, Senior, a Provincial Land Surveyor and grandfather of the instrument's present owner, Donald McGeorge of Chatham.

The degree to which J.G. Joseph was the exception to the rule that early Jewish arrivals in Toronto were merchants rather than craftsmen, requires continuing evaluation. During Joseph's tenure in Toronto it was not uncommon for retailers to engrave their names and the location of their businesses on imported goods or on merchandise made by others. For example, early Canadian clock sellers commonly signed themselves as the "makers" of imported American wooden clockworks and locally manufactured clock cases. Instrument makers, as well as instrument retailers, often engraved their names on items imported whole or on items possibly imported as components and assembled here. The problem of defining Canadian content, and who actually made what, existed long before Free Trade agreements and before Honda cars were assembled in Alliston, Ontario.

Joseph's advertisements in Cincinnati and Toronto consistently identify him as making and repairing a variety of goods. Edward Fisher of the Museum of Visual Science and Optometry at the University of Waterloo has suggested that the silver spectacles "could easily have been made by this pioneer optician." Similarly, Ross Fox, formerly of the National Gallery of Canada, noted that Joseph "no doubt ... also worked in silver — that is, at the very least he must have engaged in the specialized work of making gold and silver spectacle frames." Donald Webster of the Royal Ontario Museum has, however, observed that "there is [at present] no way to tell whether Joseph actually made this silver or not." He further noted that "very little is known ... about the economic and distribution systems of silver. If it was like other commercial crafts ... I would expect that there was a lot of component purchasing, specialized suppliers, contracting and sub-contracting, and piecework." Finally, J.G. Joseph's skill in calibrating either the scales of household instruments or of surveying instruments is unknown. Normally, the accurate subdivision of a circle would have been done using a dividing engine; whether Joseph had access to such a mechanical device, whether he calibrated the brass circles manually using a dividing plate, or whether he imported already-calibrated brass plates is an open question. William Daniels, a Toronto-based Ontario Land Surveyor having considerable experience with historical Canadian surveying instruments, is currently researching the stylistic and functional aspects of the compass marked "Toronto, C.W". Another source of information may be the characteristics of yet-to-be-discovered artifacts signed by Joseph while he lived and worked in Cincinnati.

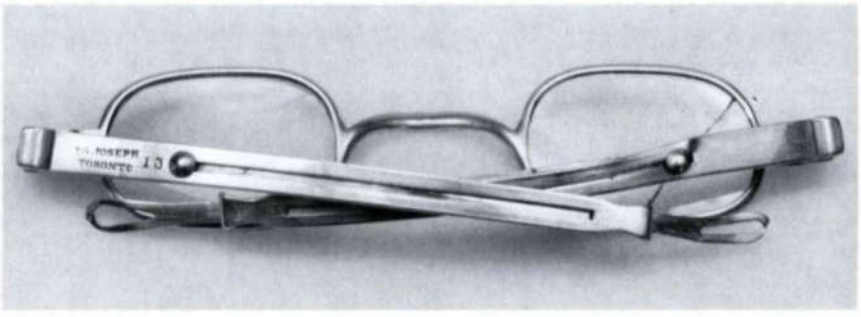
Toronto's first Jewish craftsman left an elusive legacy



JUDAH G. JOSEPH

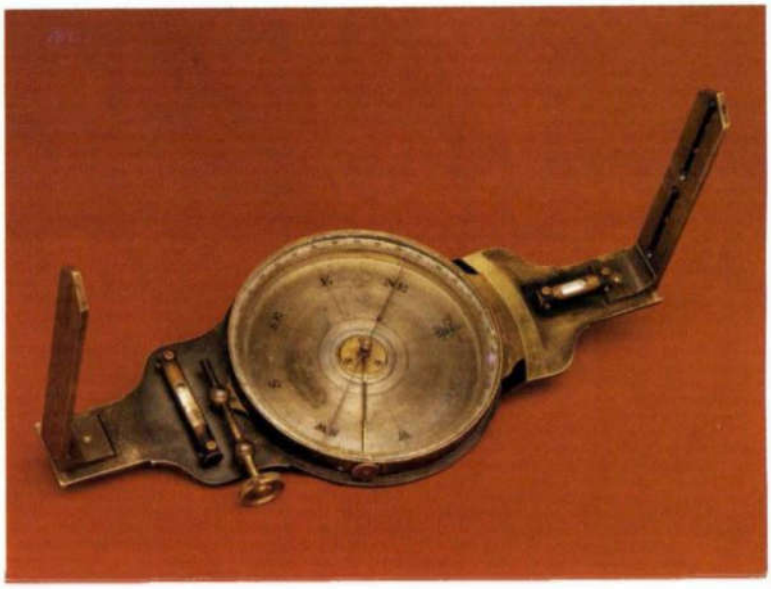
Face of J.G. Joseph compass marked "Toronto C.W." (Canada West).

Face of surveying compass sold by J.G. Joseph at his Toronto shop.

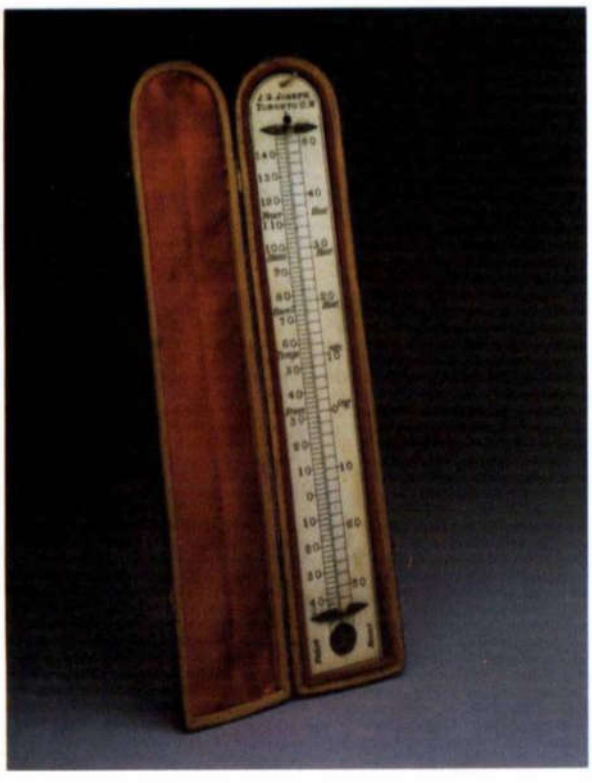


Spectacles showing the "J.G. Joseph Toronto" imprint.

The surveying compass sold by Joseph and used by Provincial Land Surveyor William G. McGeorge.



Ivory thermometer backplate in its original case, inscribed "J.G. Joseph Toronto C.W."



Silver marks (above and below) from items sold by J.G. Joseph. Examples of Joseph silver can be seen on page 5.

City of Toronto Archives

King Street East, where Joseph kept shop until his death in 1857.

As mentioned, Judah Gershom Joseph is regarded as the first permanent Jewish settler in Toronto; this is in remembrance of the fact that he, unlike other early Jewish settlers, stayed rather than moving on. In his later years this devout, orthodox Jew became a leader in the small Jewish community that was developing in Toronto in the late 1840s and in the 1850s. Joseph, along with Abraham Nordheimer, is remembered by today's Jewish community as having purchased the land for a Jewish cemetery on Pape Avenue in September 1849 — the cemetery in Toronto's east end in which he is buried in an unidentified grave.

Ross Fox has cautioned that Judah Gershom Joseph may be confused with Joseph G. Joseph born in 1812 and also a silversmith in Cincinnati. It may, however, be that the date is a mistake and that the two are one and the same person. It is known, from an unusual source — the St. John, New Brunswick *City Gazette* of 20 February 1834, that Joseph G. Joseph of Cincinnati was married to Rebecca Symonds in Cincinnati in 1834, it may or may not be coincidence that the executrix of Judah Gershom Joseph's will was Rebecca Joseph, presumably his wife.

Judah Gershom Joseph's obituary in the *Toronto Mirror* of 29 May 1857, described him as having

> enjoyed a great degree of well deserved popularity here. His manner was cheerful, open-hearted and familiar, and thus he won the good wishes of the public. He had a pleasant word for all. He was no man's enemy, and all who knew him loudly speak his praise and regret his loss. As a good citizen and a sincere friend, he will long be remembered in Toronto. He came here when the city was in its infancy, and prospered with it. In his mode of life, he was domestic and intensely attached to his family. He has left a wife and several children to mourn his loss.

The prosperity referred to is reflected in the $47,179.92 value of Joseph's personal property at the time of his death and the sum of at least $29,000 that his widow received for the business. Little is known of J.G. Joseph's descendants. One son, Edward, died as a youth a year after the 1849 purchase of the Jewish cemetery, and he, like his father, is buried there in an unidentified grave. A second son, George, provided an important link between two competing Jewish groups in 1861; he left for Montreal soon after his father's death, then went to England where he died after the turn of the century. Joseph's oldest daughter, Louisa, married Henry (Hyman) J. Altman of Montreal. She and her husband moved to New York where she eventually died. Joseph's younger daughter married a Mr. Kartosk of Montreal; they, together with Mrs. J.G. Joseph, left for Liverpool, England in the 1860s. All three died there.

J.G. Joseph's business was, after his death on 14 May 1857, sold to Thomas H. Lee and to his daughter Louisa's husband, Henry J. Altman; it continued as J.G. Joseph and Co. until its bankruptcy in October 1878. J.G. Joseph and Co. discontinued the sale of surveying instruments; the business has been described as "the leading retail jewellers and silversmiths in Upper Canada" [*sic*] in the late 1850s and 1860s. The company operated at 56 King Street East in 1857. However, by 1859 it had moved to 83 King Street East. Other locations recorded for the business include 5 King Street East and 46 Yonge Street in 1867 and 35 Front Street in 1877. A 72 King Street East location recorded for J.G. Joseph for 1864 must apply to J.G. Joseph and Co. ◆

Peter von Bitter is a palaeontologist on the staff of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

Gateway to Canada

Pier 21, Halifax, was the golden door to millions seeking a new life

By Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic

When the Holland-America steamship, the *Nieuw Amsterdam,* slipped into Halifax harbour on 28 March 1928 it launched one of the most colourful and compelling chapters of twentieth-century Canadian history. With its cargo of 51 newcomers, it steamed to the southern end of the long, deep harbour where its arrival marked the official opening of Pier 21, an immigration complex that had been a decade in the making. Over the next forty years, this facility would greet and process a steady stream of newcomers from many parts of the world. In time it would become known as the Gateway to Canada.

The salinity of the Halifax harbour had been well known for centuries. Open year round, it contained a full ten square miles of protected water with negligible tide conditions and was a thirty-minute steaming distance from the open sea. On the basis of the harbour alone, Halifax was the perfect choice for the ferrying of immigrants to Canada from the British Isles and all of Europe.

Added to this was Halifax's lengthy immigration connection, a connection that preceded the opening of Pier 21 by more than a century. Even in the early 1800s immigrants were drawn to Canada, lured by the prospect of a new beginning and a better life. They endured the perils of the sea, the hardships of a sixteen-week voyage in an open, leaking vessel, and the starvation that followed when the rations inevitably ran out. Many perished under tragic circumstances.

The *Acadian Recorder* observed in July 1839, that, "Upon the whole we conscientiously believe that one fourth of all immigrants who sail ... never reach America." The newspaper went so far as to denounce the seaworthiness of many of the vessels used in the transport of immigrants across the Atlantic, condemning them as being fit only for firewood.

Pier 21 had been built to replace Pier 2, an aging, sagging structure that no longer had the capacity to handle the ever-increasing ocean traffic. On the eve of its opening, Pier 21 held the promise of a new era for immigration; the Great War was over and migration to Canada was on the increase.

Pier 21, designed to move large numbers of people through the immigration processing system quickly and efficiently, was considered to be one of the most modern buildings of its time. It contained a large reception hall (where people sometimes indulged in an impromptu game of badminton), a number of waiting rooms, two cafeterias that could accommodate several hundred people, a canteen, a nursery, a hospital where minor surgery was routinely performed, a block of ten windowless cells, detention areas, dormitories, and a promenade overlooking the harbour. It boasted a length of 584 feet and was connected by a covered ramp to the nearby CNR train station.

From the moment it opened until its official closing in 1971, it bustled with perpetual, frenetic activity. In 1929 alone, 165,000 immigrants queued up the gangway at Pier 21. In total, an estimated one and a quarter million newcomers entered Canada by way of the Pier 21 portals. Through the decades only a small percentage of the immigrants actually settled in Atlantic Canada; the vast majority boarded the specially commissioned Colonist Trains for destinations in Quebec, Ontario, and the Western provinces.

Although there are no official numbers available, it is

Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission

An immigrant family enjoys its first meal in Canada at the unfinished Pier 21, Halifax, 1925.

known that a good number of the arrivals in Halifax were ultimately destined for the United States. Some travelled by way of Canada on vessels that were banned from entering American ports. But many, it seems, chose to journey to America via Halifax because the less expedient route was also less expensive. The difference in fare — one dollar.

Pier 21's volunteer team played an essential role in the reception of the new arrivals. They were members of various service groups and chaplains representing several denominations. They were the ones who comforted and consoled, who provided reassurance in the face of frightening uncertainty, who offered a glimmer of hope to the refugees no longer able to see beyond destitution and despair. They were also the translators who could be called upon at all hours of the day and night, such as on the morning the *Georgic* arrived with hundreds of passengers who collectively spoke thirty-two languages.

In the 1930s, as the Depression settled over the Western world, the number of newcomers to Canada dwindled to a mere one-tenth of the numbers of the previous decade. Trans-Atlantic ocean traffic was dramatically reduced as more and more would-be newcomers came to realize that Canada could no longer provide the economic opportunities of the 1920s. In an unsuccessful attempt to bolster business, several steamship lines slashed their fares by fifteen per cent.

In Canada jobs became alarmingly scarce, salary cuts an everyday reality. As more and more people vied for fewer jobs, discrimination rose to the surface and focused its eye upon the migrant worker who, to many, was tangible proof that work was being taken from "real" Canadians. Accordingly, the migrant worker bore the brunt of degradations, both spontaneous and organized, that were largely induced by the tensions of the time.

During this arduous decade Pier 21 witnessed far more departures than arrivals. Many disenchanted and embittered immigrants chose to return voluntarily to their homelands; those unable to weather the Depression were financially compelled to leave. Still others left under orders for deportation. "What a country!" one disgruntled Briton was heard to say upon leaving, "Paper money and wooden houses!"

In the weeks immediately following the declaration of the Second World War, Pier 21 was hastily readied for the transport to Europe of an estimated 368,000 troops, to be accomplished in 300 sailings. (The largest single contingent to sail on one ship consisted of 14,000 sailors, soldiers, and airmen on board the *Queen Elizabeth* in late 1942.)

Even though the Department of Immigration had been required to relinquish 43,000 square feet of space to the Department of National Defence at the onset of war, Pier 21 remained far from idle. Now, however, much of what went on at the Pier became heavily shrouded in secrecy. No longer did the public and press have access to arrival and departure timetables. Ships came and went at all hours of the day and night, always in secret, and always in convoy under the protection of the navy. (Indeed, only two ships were authorized to travel unescorted; both the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Mary* were simply too fast for the slower moving convoys.)

Equally anonymous was the routine processing by Immigration of large numbers of seamen who jumped ship in Halifax to seek entry into Canada. Many were from nations that had been forcibly allied with or hopelessly trampled by Germany. On obtaining landed immigrant status, many wasted no time in enlisting with the Allies, their chief motive being to add their fury to the onslaught against the enemy.

Also arriving during those years were a large number of sailors who had literally had their ships torpedoed out from under them on the Atlantic. Time and again groups of dishevelled survivors arrived in Halifax by way of freighters and troop carriers or anything that floated.

In this same climate Pier 21 witnessed the processing of many prisoners of war. Most notorious among them was convicted war criminal Kurt Meyer, Commander of the 12th and 25th Panzer Regiment. Previously sentenced for his part in the murder of Canadian troops captured in France, Meyer was whisked off to the Dorchester Federal Penitentiary in New Brunswick where he spent six years before being returned to Germany.

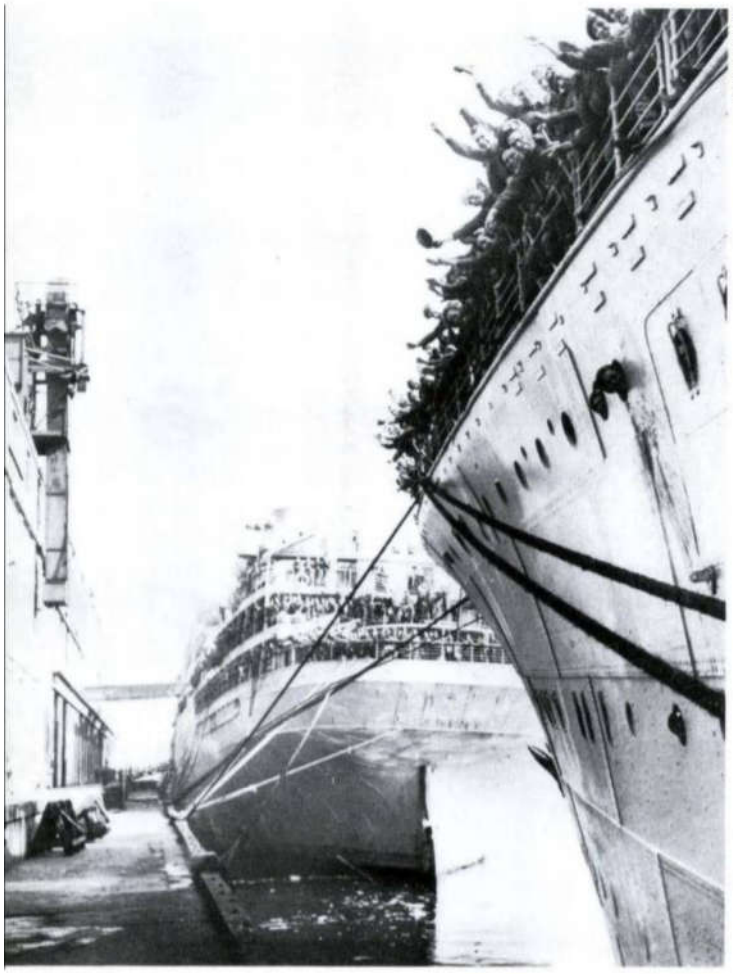
An unlikely group of travellers to Pier 21 were the British "Guest Children". Shortly after war was declared, and in reaction to fear that it might eventually be overtaken by Nazi Germany, Britain initiated a plan to evacuate British children to Canada and other Dominions. The plan was met with a serious setback when two vessels carrying young Britons were destroyed by the enemy at sea. In the end, only about 3,000 children were evacuated to Canada in 1940 and 1941, far fewer than had originally been planned for. Although all of the evacuees were required to return to Britain after the war, a large number later chose to emigrate to Canada.

Public Archives of Nova Scotia

British evacuees safe at last at Pier 21, 1941.

In 1944 a raging fire, believed to have started among mattresses that were being disinfected, quickly reduced Pier 21 to a blackened, gutted shell. Miraculously, few people were in the building when the early morning fire broke out, and no lives were lost. Port officials estimated the damages at $350,000. But no price could be put on the reams of Immigration files and other vital information that had been burned.

An immediate crisis arose. The military and immigration operations at Pier 21 could hardly be halted while the building was being restored. Accordingly,



Halifax Herald

The troop carrier "Samaria", left, and an unidentified sister vessel wait to unload returned soldiers at Pier 21, circa 1945.

four wooden sheds were hastily constructed nearby to provide offices; passengers and immigrants would continue to be processed in the gutted pier. For those fleeing countries still smoldering from war-time shelling and carnage, being welcomed to Canada in a gutted ruin must have provided a moment or two of intense disquietude.

The completion of the Pier's restoration in late 1946 was timely since the post-war tide of immigrants and refugees was already beginning to rise. In the months immediately after the war, all available ships had been enlisted to transport Canadian troops back home. Now the Department of National Defence concentrated on moving an estimated 48,000 women who had met and married Canadian servicemen during the war, and their 22,000 children.

For the majority of the war brides, this venture marked their first time away from home. Many who were themselves barely out of adolescence came with an infant in arms and scarcely enough information about Canada to afford expectations that were anywhere near accurate. The Department of National Defence must have anticipated this, however, for they distributed a series of booklets intended to provide an orientation to Canada. One in particular must have generated a few questions about the status of Canadian civilization: Its title — *How to Deliver Your Own Baby.*

Concurrent with the arrival of the war brides was the more sobering flood of refugees, those who could no longer return to their homeland, and Displaced Persons (DPs), those who no longer had a homeland to return to. They were the poorest of the poor, arriving without money, sponsors, and proper documentation. Like other immigrants who came without the necessary paperwork, they were placed in detention until their problems could be sorted out. In the late 1940s, the Pier 21 detention quarters were filling at an alarming rate.

To add to the government's consternation, DPs began arriving on their own in small, coastal vessels ill-equipped to navigate the high seas. From their native Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, they laboured to Sweden where they paid for their perilous passage and threw themselves on the mercy of the Atlantic. That many of them made it safely to Halifax was nothing short of miraculous. The *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* described one such arrival in 1949:

> Tired, cramped and hungry, 238 Baltic refugees (including 60 children) reached Halifax yesterday aboard the 183-ton minesweeper *Sarabande* after having left Gothenburg, Sweden, almost a month ago.
>
> Many of them still bearing the numbers branded on them in German and Russian concentration camps, the refugees, representing all walks of life, were eager to get ashore and get started on their new life in Canada.
>
> Last night the group was still huddled together aboard the old British minesweeper but immigration authorities said they hoped to disembark them today. Only a few had entry visas.
>
> Fishermen, tradesmen, mechanics, shipping clerks, they all hoped to continue the same lines of work in Canada. A Polish music conductor and a dentist were among those who wanted to continue in their chosen fields.

The sporadic arrival of these destitute DPs left the government grappling with the limitations of its own immigration policies. Should these homeless people be turned away for failing to comply with proper procedures for entry, or should they be granted asylum, thereby paving the way for others who would attempt to gain entry in the same manner? While the issue was being debated in parliament, public awareness and sentiment grew steadily.

Then two incidents occurred coincidentally and almost simultaneously, serving to take some of the pressure off the government. In Halifax, 267 DPs were suddenly granted landed immigrant status and released from detention. Off the coast of Ireland, another small ship enroute to Canada was intercepted by Canadian officials and forced to turn back. Designed to carry a maximum of 50 passengers, it had 385 DPs aboard.

The resulting message to the Canadian public was clear: while Canada would not be hard-nosed in its dealings with a destitute people who had risked all to step ashore at Pier 21, it would nonetheless come down hard on the clandestine operation of the transporting of refugees from Sweden across the Atlantic.

On the heels of the war brides, refugees, and DPs came a surging tide of post-war immigration. In the 1950s, Halifax welcomed an average of 45,000 immigrants a year, roughly one third of Canada's annual average. Almost routinely the Halifax newspapers told of heavy passenger traffic at Pier 21. "1,700 Passengers Land From Two Ocean Liners," read an April 1952 headline in the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald.* The article reported that more than 4,500 people had arrived within the previous five-day period.

Unlike the refugees and DPs, many of the immigrants arrived with their families and carefully selected possessions intact. The Dutch became known for the large wooden crates they brought with them, forerunners, perhaps, of the modern shipping container. Pier 21 officials used to joke that the crates contained everything but the kitchen sink. The joking stopped abruptly one day when a crate was routinely opened to reveal a large, gleaming sink nestled among the household goods.

Poorer immigrants came, not with crates of linen and china, but with their own prized repertoire of dependable household possessions — an ancient sewing machine, feather mattresses, cooking pots and children's beds. Many carried nothing but a battered valise; others arrived wearing borrowed clothing.

The mass exodus from Hungary in the late 1950s resulted in 35,000 refugees arriving in Canada, approximately half by way of Pier 21. Many were found to be suffering from tuberculosis, and under Canada's old medical requirements their deportation would have been mandatory. However, under new guidelines hastily established in 1959, coincidentally decreed the Year of the Refugee by the United Nations, refugees afflicted with this disease were permitted to stay. Moreover, their treatment costs would be covered by the government. By year's end it was estimated that one hundred families had been helped by this new policy.

For Pier 21, the 1950s was a decade of animated activity, heyday of immigration to Canada. Stories of cultural and ethnic particularities abound: Kellogg's gave away samples of corn flakes which mostly ended up being crunched underfoot on the Pier 21 floors, the recipients having failed to recognize it as a food product. The free sample distributed by Imperial Tobacco generated considerably more interest. This unexpected luxury had universal appeal and was eagerly welcomed and judiciously guarded by the recipients.

Unverified stories of mystery also circulated around Pier 21. One that is often repeated tells of gold bullion, reportedly worth millions of dollars, brought to Halifax

Photo courtesy Ausma Nevalds

Eight-year-old Ausma Nevalds from Latvia was the 50,000th Displaced Person to be received by Canada. She arrived in 1949.

on a warship during the Second World War. It is said that the gold, of unknown origin, was stored for a time in the Pier's cavernous walk-in vault. What became of it remains a puzzle. The vault, meanwhile, has been empty of all but cobwebs for many years.

As 1960 dawned, a number of telltale signs hinted at the imminent ending of the Pier 21 era. The age of the jet liner had arrived; the age of the ocean liner was ineluctably fading into the past. The ships that had always been filled to repletion were now arriving half empty. The number of stately liners to call at Halifax dwindled sharply, and their visits became less and less frequent.

Public Archives of Nova Scotia

These British war brides, with their children, were among thousands who entered Canada via Pier 21, Halifax, after the Second World War.

Ironically, the last large groups of people to be processed at Pier 21 arrived not by ship but by air. Between 1961 and 1963 Cubans seeking refugee status in the United States defected in Gander, Newfoundland. Because an American entry visa could take six months to procure, the Cubans were transported to Halifax for detention at Pier 21.

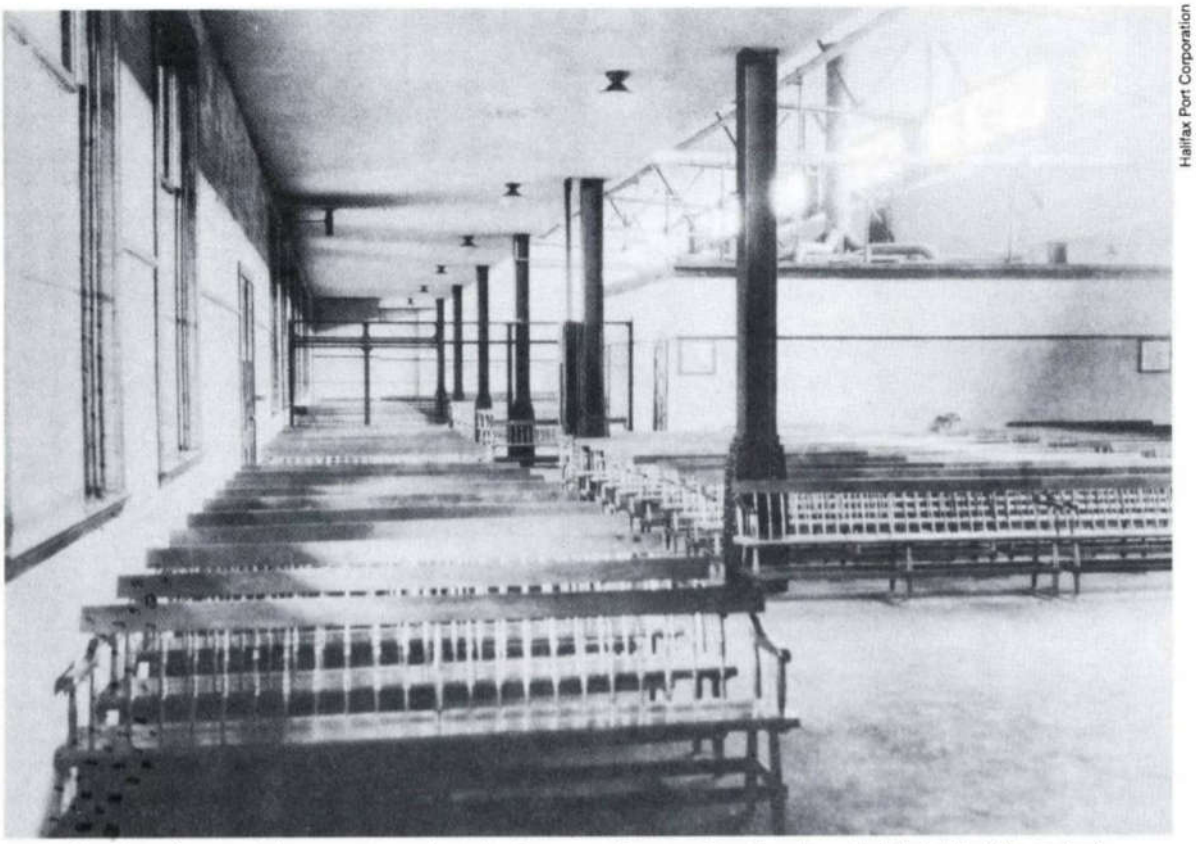
In 1968 the number of passengers arriving in Nova Scotia by air exceeded the number of arrivals by ship. The first death knell was sounded for Pier 21. By the end of the decade, the Department of Manpower and Immigration could no longer justify the continued expense of a facility that was simply no longer needed. Ocean passenger traffic had all but ceased, and the processing of immigrants had been decentralized to more than thirty Immigration Centres being established at the international airports across the country.

And so, in March of 1971, Pier 21 was quietly closed. Employment and Immigration Canada paid an emotional tribute in their 1978 publication, *The Pier 21 Story:*

> Gone, apparently forever, was the excitement, the challenge, the exhilaration, of dealing with hundreds of even thousands of immigrants at once — people who had travelled for a week or more to reach Canada and who still had a train journey of days before them; people receiving their first impression of a vast new country; people with special needs and unique problems; people who at Pier 21 were for almost fifty years met, examined, fed, nursed, sometimes housed, assisted with loans, married, even occasionally buried. Pier 21 was in many ways a bustling self-sufficient village hidden within the vast anonymous looking transit shed and the people who worked there will never forget it.

Today Pier 21 sits as an empty, aging structure, its colourless facade offering little hint of the drama that once unfolded there. In order to survive on its salient waterfront location, it will require an enduring mandate to carry it into the next century.

In 1991 a group of people with a vision for Pier 21 joined forces to found the Pier 21 Society. Encouraged by the success of the Ellis Island restoration project completed in New York in 1989, the Society's objective



Halifax Port Corporation

Pier 21 stands empty, its long years as a major point of entry over. For many Canadians, it was their first sight of the new land.

is to ensure the preservation and restoration of the Pier: "This landmark will serve as not only a memorial to trans-Atlantic immigration, but also as a focus for the celebration of mutliculturalism", reads their brochure.

Public interest is beginning to grow, and a feasibility study is currently underway to determine how the 31,000 square feet of space can best be utilized. Under consideration is a muticultural complex and a reception centre for the many cruise ships that frequent the Halifax harbour. At the top of the list of priorites is the establishment of a national immigration museum. Both the Federal Government and the Province of Nova Scotia are beginning to express interest in the project.

The proposed museum will honour and perpetuate the memory of the hundreds of thousands who passed in trepidation through the Pier 21 corridors in search of their tomorrows. It will stand as a lasting tribute to people like eight-year-old Ausma Nevalds, who in 1949 became the 50,000th Displaced Person to be received by Canada. People like the five-year old Polish girl, her name unrecorded, who died suddenly at Pier 21 in 1937. And people like F.A. Bloedow, the first immigrant to disembark the *Nieuw Amsterdam* in 1928, and officially the first to mark the opening of Halifax's Pier 21. ◆

Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic lives in Victoria, British Columbia, and is the author of "Canadian By Choice" and co-author, with J.P. LeBlanc, of "Pier 21: The Gateway that Changed Canada", both published by Lancelot Press.

JUSTICE TO EVERY MAN'S DOOR

'He Who Listens'

By DEAN BURNS

The 1950s brought about abrupt changes to Canada's North. The Cold War put DEW Line stations across the Arctic. Exploration and mining increased, roads and schools were built, health care improved and the economy grew. The native population, in particular the Inuit, were often ill-prepared for the advent of the modern era. Their passage was not to be smooth. Well-intentioned but misguided directives from Ottawa ensured that. One directive that Ottawa may have ultimately felt was misguided was their appointment in 1955 of J.H. Sissons as Chief Justice of the Northwest Territories. Sissons was 63, had a bad leg as a result of polio and had never been "North of Sixty". In the next 11 years, flying as much as 30,000 miles annually, Sissons dispensed his personal brand of justice. It was marked by compassion, understanding of aboriginals and their beliefs and great disdain for "the bright boys" in Ottawa. To the Inuit, Sissons was known as Ekoktoegee — He Who Listens. When he retired in 1966, the 11 years he spent in the North became known as "The Sissons Era of Justice".

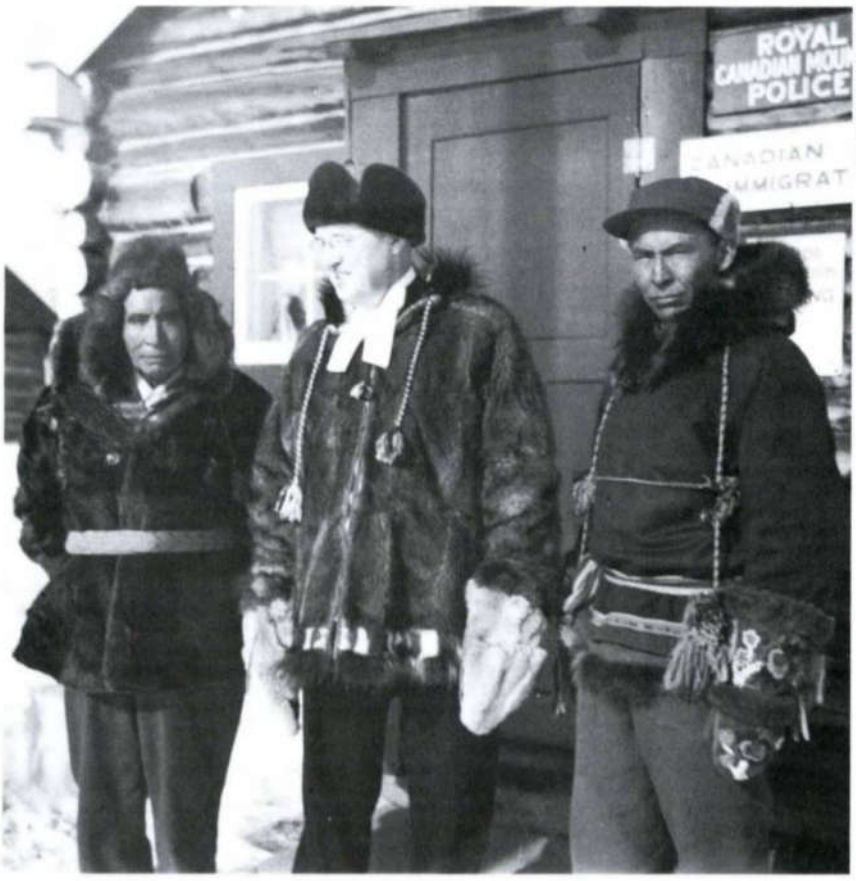
Justice J.H. Sissons Defied the 'Bright Boys' of Ottawa And Won the Respect of Northern Canadians.

John Howard (Jack) Sissons was born in 1892 and raised at the Orillia Mental Asylum. His father was the chief attendant and the family resided in a house within the grounds of the asylum. The Orillia of Sissons' youth was to a large extent the Orillia depicted in Stephen Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town.* He was unaware of this at the time though. Of greater significance was his mother's cousin, African explorer David Livingstone. Sissons was filled with tales of his famous relation and it was Livingstone's beliefs that helped form the foundation of Sissons' dealings with Canadian aboriginals. In his memoirs, *Judge of the Far North,* Sissons wrote: "The Livingstone tradition had a lot to do with it ... the adventures of our famous relative in Africa excited my first interest in our own Arctic. There were lessons in [Livingstone's] mission and vision, his hatred of injustice, his anger at the abuse of colonial power ... his understanding and affection for the native African and his respect for their natural human rights."

Another early influence on Sissons, was the asylum gardener who helped shape his politics. He was told that "Tories were scoundrels" and was supplied with the proof by way of *Toronto Globe* editorials. The gardener pressed upon Sissons the necessity of an education and a legal career, for reform to take place. In the 1896 federal election that brought Laurier to power, (and all of four years old) he was coached to resonantly declare he was a "SPG" — a Scotch Presbyterian Grit. The same year Sissons found himself unable to rise from bed one morning. He had polio. The local blacksmith fashioned a brace for his leg and aside from the taunts of classmates, which he responded to with fists, he never viewed his affliction as a handicap.

Following high school, Sissons left Orillia to pursue a variety of occupations in Ontario and Alberta. He eventually earned enough to enroll at Queen's University in 1913.

Hard evidence: The Regina vs. Kaotak trial, December 1955, is commemorated in two carvings in the Sissons-Morrow Collection. At the top of page 18 Kaotak stands before the "big judge". In the carving below a suicide death takes place while a boy looks away. The carvings recall Sissons' first trial in the North.



Erik Watt/NWT Archives

Judge Sissons stands with ex-Chief Peter Moses, left, and Chief Charlie Peter Charlie outside the Old Crow RCMP office. The year was 1956.

As a reporter for the Arts faculty Sissons wrote for the *University Journal Supplement* and offered his views on the most effective way in which to manage one's time:

> The time when I most love to idle is when I have the most work to do. At the present time I should be writing a theme — an essay that must be handed in tomorrow. But I am not going to write it just now and I have two excellent reasons for not doing so: First it is too soon after dinner — a person should not work for several hours after eating. I find it a good rule not to work until about eleven o'clock in the evening and then retire about eleven-fifteen. Secondly you can do only one thing at a time and do it right. Just now I am smoking, and it certainly would be ridiculous to suppose that I am going to quit smoking and write a theme.

This feigned laissez-faire approach to academia did not prevent Sissons from graduating in 1917 and he moved to Alberta to study law. By 1921, he had passed the bar exams and was practising in Grande Prairie.

In 1929 Sissons married Frances Johnson, who was visiting from Ireland. A son, Neil, was born in 1930 and a daughter, Frances, in 1932. During the depression, Sissons accepted farm produce and firewood as payment for legal services. He also remained a fervent Liberal and as a party secretary he campaigned relentlessly, recruiting support from the Métis.

Sissons was the Peace River Liberal candidate in the federal election of 1940 and with the help of a Métis campaign manager won. As an MP, Sissons sought the inclusion of 700 Métis of the Lesser Slave Lake area in treaty arbitration. Sissons refers to this as his first run-in with the Department of Indian Affairs. He assembled a judicial inquiry to examine the matter, but found "Indian Affairs had put it over us by restricting the terms of reference to load the inquiry against the Indians." Louis St. Laurent, then Minister of Justice, was sought out by Sissons, and found a way to redirect the inquiry in a manner that resulted in the Métis being included in the treaty.

The federal election of 1945 saw Sissons defeated. In 1946 Prime Minister Mackenzie King named him a district court judge in southern Alberta. Based in Lethbridge, Sissons served as District Judge until 1950, when he was promoted to the position of Chief Judge. Five years later, at the age of 63, when retirement would be the expected choice, Sissons became Chief Justice of the Northwest Territories. In his memoirs,

Sissons points out that Livingstone went in search of the Nile at the age of 60 and Sissons believed his "preceding 63 years were but a preparation" for his 11 years spent in the North.

Sissons' record was one reason behind the appointment, but it wasn't the only reason. Stuart Garson, Minister of Justice, wanted Sissons for the position because the Department of Indian Affairs looked upon the opening as a chance to slip a civil servant into the judiciary and set a precedent. As Sissons points out "They had law degrees but little or no experience in the practice of law and certainly weren't qualified for the bench." Garson also believed that an effective Northern judge would have to be someone who had been called at various times, "crazy, outspoken, unorthodox, opinionated, irritating, tough, crusty, cantankerous, controversial, a maverick, a character, and a stubborn old coot."

"Colonialism" is the term most often used to describe the governing of the Territories prior to self-government in 1967. Usually associated with the exploitive practices of European nations, colonialism is the only accurate way in which to describe the relationship between Ottawa and the Territories. Government by distance and in many instances, indifference. The North was viewed as a rung in the career ladder of some civil servants. In his memoirs, Sissons states "Many of the civil servants were in the North, but not of the North, and Ottawa was their spiritual home as it was indeed the capital of the Northwest Territories." Sissons as Chief Justice saw the judiciary as a check and balance to "the powers that be."

When Sissons went North, he also moved North and eventually had a house built in Yellowknife. He had to cover the cost himself. No one expected him to do this, as it was assumed that he would remain in the South and travel to Yellowknife to hold court.

Sissons' first trial revealed many of the problems he hoped to remedy. Prior to his arrival, anyone charged with serious offences in the Territories was tried in the Provincial capital having legal jurisdiction over the area where the offence took place. This changed when the courthouse was built in Yellowknife. Allan Kaotak, an Inuit from Cambridge Bay was charged with the murder of his father. Sissons wanted to "bring justice to every man's door." Kaotak's door was Cambridge Bay, not Yellowknife. New to the job, he allowed the trial to take place in Yellowknife, but it would be the last time. All his subsequent trials would be near the home of the accused. Sissons felt this was the only way to insure a jury of "peers".

The grist of Kaotak's trial was whether he had murdered his father or assisted him in his suicide. The crown argued that Kaotak had murdered his father after a dispute over an arranged marriage. The defence claimed Kaotak had merely helped his father take his own life, pointing out that a piece of twine was tied to the trigger of a gun, found 3 feet from the body. Sissons in researching Inuit suicide found that it was part of the culture if one was old or physically or mentally infirm. It was also the duty of relatives to assist in such suicides. After rejecting 6 whites as jurors, Sissons replaced them with Inuit from Cambridge Bay. At times, the trial required three interpreters, because one of the principle witnesses was deaf. The jury took 20 minutes to come back with a verdict of not guilty.

After the trial, Kaotak presented Sissons with a carving reflecting his impression of the trial. It was the first of many carvings Sissons would receive or commission from his trials.

In his efforts to "bring justice to every man's door",

One of the Ottawa "bright boys" gets a shove from Justice Sissons in this 1963 cartoon from "Maclean's".

Sissons embarked on his first circuit of the Eastern Arctic in 1958. This was of great significance, particularly since it was not even considered part of his jurisdiction. The Department of Justice believed the area did not merit his attention, while the RCMP, the law in the East, "handled matters by giving Eskimo offenders a kick in the pants." Sissons disagreed.

Sissons undertook the circuit despite a barrage of telegrams from the Department of Justice urging him not to. Upon completion of his tour, he sent a blistering letter to Ottawa, and the department backed off, although reluctantly. Sissons was always amazed at the pettiness of Southern bureaucrats. Once they complained that chartered planes were only for the use of

civil servants, after Sissons helped transport a native youth to hospital. The youth had fallen through spring ice, broken his leg, and then crawled for three days on his hands and knees until he reached Fort Liard.

In 1958, Sissons presided over a trial that received a great deal of coverage in Canada and the United States. Sissons was very adept at dealing with the media and had invited the reporters to accompany him on his court circuit.

The trial involved murder, child abandonment and negligent death. The accused was an Inuit woman named Kikkik. As far as Sissons was concerned, the responsible party were the "bright boys" in the Department of Northern Affairs.

Caribou herds were reportedly dwindling in the interior barren lands. Northern Affairs decided to move the Ihalmiut Inuit from the interior to the coast of Hudson Bay, believing food would be more plentiful and the Ihalmiut could adapt. "Experienced northern hands thought it was one of the most benighted of official schemes," Sissons later wrote.

In January, Kikkik's family and the family of her half-brother, Ootuk, had made their way to North Henik Lake en route to Eskimo Point on Hudson Bay. They were 40 miles from a Hudson's Bay Company outpost at Padley. They were starving and a blizzard had set in. Kikkik's husband Hallow left their igloo to ice-fish. He never returned; he was shot and killed on the ice by Ootuk who had borrowed Hallow's rifle from Kikkik. When Ootuk returned, Kikkik, unaware that Hallow was dead, asked for the rifle back. Ootuk refused, shot at Kikkik, and missed. A struggle ensued and Kikkik managed to pin the frail Ootuk. She sent her daughter Ailoyoak to get Hallow. When Ailoyoak returned and told Kikkik he was dead, Kikkik tried to stab Ootuk, but the knife was too dull. She told Ailoyoak to get her another knife and killed Ootuk. The prosecution sought a verdict of manslaughter, the defence argued that Kikkik was protecting her family from a man who had already displayed malice towards them. The six-person jury of four whites and two Inuit took ten minutes to return a verdict of not guilty.

The remaining charges against Kikkik stemmed from incidences following Ootuk's death. In temperatures as low as -40, Kikkik set out for Padley with her five children. On the first day she met Hallow's brother, Yahah

This dramatic carving from the Sissons-Morrow Collection shows Kikkik avenging the death of her husband.

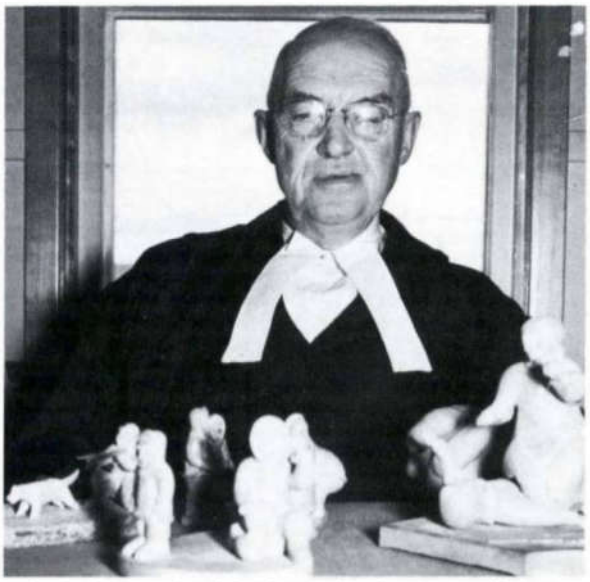
and his family, also headed for Padley. By the third day, she couldn't keep up with Yahah, whose own family was starving. The next night, Kikkik and her children slept in the open. The following morning she caught up to Yahah at an igloo he had built. Yahah told Kikkik to stay at the igloo while he continued on to Padley where he would send back help. It took two days to reach his destination. Kikkik waited five days at the igloo with no food, and with no help in sight, set out for Padley.

After a day of travel, she realized she wasn't strong enough to take all her children. After building a snow-house, using a frying pan, she left the two youngest behind, and continued. An RCMP search plane located Kikkik later that day, Kikkik was afraid and believing the children she had left behind were dead, she told them so. Based on this information, the RCMP declined to send out the search plane. The next day, the shelter was located and the RCMP found that one of the children was still alive. This was the basis of the "child abandonment and negligence causing death" charges against Kikkik.

At the beginning of the trial, Sissons told the jury that Kikkik was a "woman of a Stone Age society" and that "Justice demands that we revert in our thinking to an earlier age and try to understand Kikkik and her life and her land and her society". The jury had taken this into account on the charge of manslaughter, and did so again, with a verdict of not guilty on the remaining charges.

In trying Inuit cases, Sissons was aware that the terms "guilty" and "not guilty" had no equivalent in their native language, and this often resulted in a presumption of guilt by officials. Consequently the accused didn't understand the gravity of their situation, and as a result Sissons emphasized that guilt had to be proven beyond *any* reasonable doubt. W.G. Morrow, defence counsel in many of Sissons' cases, as well as his successor, wrote in the *Alberta Law Review:* "One of [Sissons'] most important fields was his zealous fight to protect and nurture the customs of native people ... [He] had no hesitation in taking the position that he was there to protect these people and to help preserve their way of life ... Whenever there was conflict between the modern legislation and laws, and the native custom and habit, the court's approach was one of 'reserve'."

In late 1958, Sissons sent an angry letter to Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Northern Affairs. The tone of the letter was established in it's opening sentence: "Dear Mr. Hamilton, the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories is a mess." Sissons was fed up with the treatment his court had received from Ottawa, describing his jurisdiction as the "sick, unwanted, neglected child" of the department. The letter sought amendments to the Northwest Territory Act. According to Sissons, the Northern Affairs response was to give



Henry Busse/NWT Archives

Justice Sissons at his desk with items from his carving collection.

him the run-a-round, until he met the minister in Yellowknife. This meeting accomplished little, and when amendments to the act were introduced in 1960, rather than smoothing the course of justice, they complicated it.

Sissons' "reserve" invariably placed him at odds with Ottawa. One case exemplifying this concerned a native charged with "being intoxicated outside a reserve". Sissons found the defendant not guilty, based on the fact that the government had failed to meet treaty obligations and had yet to set up any reserve in the Territories. Ottawa was not pleased. Nor was it pleased with his stance on Inuit marriage customs. (It should be noted that Sissons was highly vocal in his complaints against the government when the Conservatives were in power from 1957-1963, but became abruptly silent when Lester Pearson's Liberal government was elected).

Through amendments to the Northwest Territory Act, Inuit were to be treated as anyone else in the eyes of the law. In 1961 Northern Affairs found an opportunity to test the amendments in the estate settlement of an Inuk named Noah had died intestate a year-and-a-half earlier, with an estate valued at $26,000. Noah was married according to native custom. Northern Affairs said the marriage was unlawful, according to the amendments and viewed Noah "as a male paramour and Igah [his wife] as a concubine." The department felt Noah's brothers and sisters should also be beneficiaries. The greater implications of this position, according to Sissons, was "The Eskimo marriages were a form of concubinage and ... all children of such marriages [are] illegitimate." Sissons response was quoted as "no

Ottawa bastard was going to tell me ten thousand Eskimos were bastards."

He found Noah's marriage valid and awarded the estate to his wife and child, and excluded his other relations.

Sissons tried several cases involving native hunting rights and they could hardly be termed victories. Sissons believed that game laws should not apply to natives. The pivotal case involved the shooting of a mallard duck by Michel Sikyea, a Yellowknife area Dene. Sikyea was convicted of hunting out of season by the local magistrate and was fined. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court after Sissons overturned the conviction because it repudiated the Royal Proclamation of 1763 that endorsed native hunting rights in all seasons. The Supreme Court upheld the original conviction on the grounds that Ottawa had no obligation to honour the treaty. Sissons had the duck stuffed and placed it in his office "as evidence, not of an Indian crime, but of legal intransigence and government duplicity."

According to Justice M.M. de Weerdt of the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories, the case ultimately served to bring Native hunting rights to national attention and "For the first time questions were asked as to what the Indian treaty rights were worth if they could be taken unilaterally by Parliament." The issue was eventually addressed in the Constitution Act of 1982 under aboriginal rights.

In 1963 Sissons was 71 and showed no signs of slowing down. He angered the Department of Justice after he joined the fight for territorial self-government. They felt he should stick to the administration of justice. Instead, he travelled to Ottawa to put forth his case to a House Committee examining how the territories should be governed.

The last case Sissons tried involved schizophrenia and murder. The trial took place in Spence Bay in the spring of 1966. Sissons found that the Inuit in Spence Bay had been assigned jobs as interpreters, and could not be jurors. So he sent an Otter out to gather jurors from surrounding communities, some over 1,000 miles away. Three psychiatrists were also brought in to testify.

In July of 1965, at a hunting camp 200 miles north of Spence Bay, an Inuit woman was shot and killed by her son, Aiyaoot, and her nephew, Shooyook. The woman, Soosee, was half a foot taller than anyone in the camp and had a history of mental illness and violence. In the eyes of her relatives, Soosee was possessed by demons and her murderous rages were attempts to transfer the demons to them. Fearing that she might harm the 11 children in camp, they bound Soosee, but she broke the restraints and said she was going to kill them all. Under this threat, they crossed hazardous sea ice to an island, a half mile offshore. Using a telescope, they watched Soosee destroy their camp and equipment over the course of four days — equipment and shelter they needed to live. The group decided they should try to scare Soosee away. Armed, her nephew and son approached the camp. According to the testimony of witnesses:

> A number of shots were fired to warn her away, but she kept coming towards them. Her face looked different and she was acting crazy or funny. When the bullets were flying around her she just kept on coming towards them ... they shot her. She didn't die for a long time, only after shooting her three times she died.

Soosee had gone south for treatment in 1959 and 1964 and had been diagnosed as schizophrenic. The psychiatrists testified that she had heard voices in the past urging her to violence, and was a danger to the people in the hunting camp. The jury deliberated for two-and-a-half hours, returning with a verdict of "not guilty" for Aiyaoot and one of "manslaughter" for Shooyook, with a strong plea for leniency. Sissons gave Shooyook a suspended sentence.

Sissons resigned in July of 1966 and moved to Edmonton. He wrote in his memoirs: "I had run my destined course and felt that the time had come for me to retire. In 1968, his memoirs, *Judge of the Far North* were published, and in 1969 he died.

The most telling assessment of J.H. Sissons, must come from his successor Justice William Morrow, who wrote:

> Judge Sissons has made a fetish of studying the country, the people and their history, by reading what literature there is and by his first-hand observation in his effort to understand. He is determined to prevent the words of the law books being allowed to oppress or cause undue hardship. If at times "outside" lawyers and jurists wonder at how he arrived at a decision, you can rest assured he did it to temper the white-man's law to suit the local situation and to see justice done. ◆

Dean Burns is a writer currently living in Yellowknife, NWT.

TREATY MAKING, 1930

WHO GOT WHAT AT WINISK?

By John S. Long

Ontario's newly-elected Conservative premier, Howard Ferguson, proudly announced that "every tribe that could possibly have a claim on the 'white man's' government had been taken care of." It was 1923, and treaties had just been concluded in southern Ontario with the Chippewas of Christian Island, Georgina Island and Rama, and with the Mississaugas of Rice Lake, Mud Lake, Scugog Lake and Alderville. Ferguson optimistically referred to the $500,000 settlement as "the last payment" Ontario would ever have to make in compensation to Indians for the loss of their territories. He was reported to be "naturally glad to have seen the last of the problem."

Duncan Campbell Scott, a participant in the signing of Treaty No. 9 in 1905-1906 (and by 1927 Canada's Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs), wrote the premier the following day, advising him that since 1912, when Ontario's boundary was extended north of the Albany River, "the Indian title to a large portion of the Province" north of that river had "not yet been ceded." He estimated that there were 1,500 Indians living in the region who had not yet "relinquished their aboriginal rights to this territory."

Scott was eager to "dispose of the question once and for all" and Walter C. Cain, Ontario's Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, was equally "very anxious ... that the case should be cleaned off the boards as soon as possible."

The signing by Ontario's northernmost Cree and Ojibwa Indians of an "adhesion" or extension to Treaty No. 9, in the summers of 1929 and 1930, was intended to alleviate this problem. When the official report of the treaty signing at Winisk is compared with the Crees' oral tradition, however, it seems that the event was, for the Indian participants, little more than acceptance of verbal promises, celebrated by ritual, to "look after [them], support [them] at all time and not deceive [them]." It provided "some help from the government," and "the beginning of the support" which they receive today. It may have been an acquisition of land, by the Crown, but any surrender by the Crees would appear to have been involuntary.

Mine is a voluntary Odyssey, so I do not have the defence that David Sutherland offered to the priest who interviewed him at length on this subject in 1957:

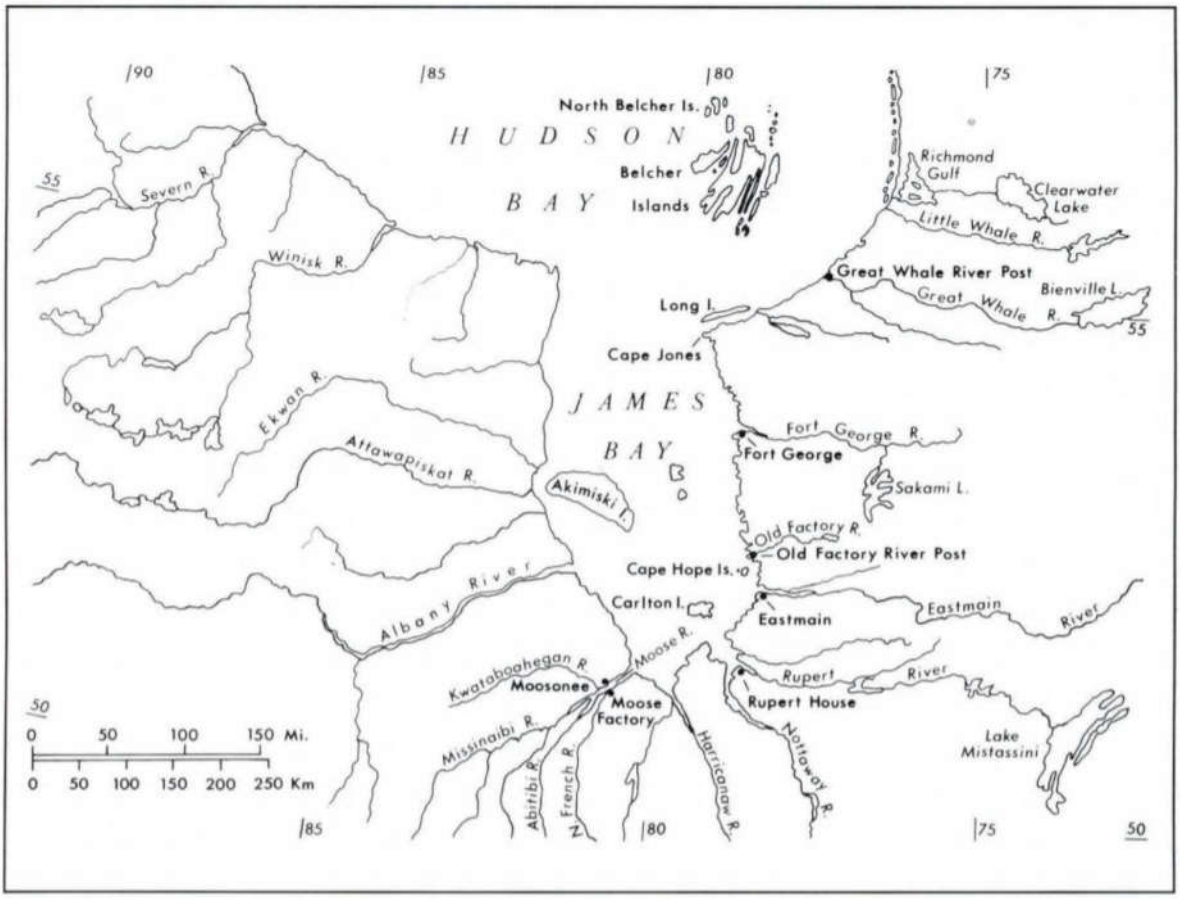
> I was asked to speak of what I remember and this is how I understand it. If I am wrong, I need not apologize because I did not volunteer to speak but was asked; and a person that is asked to speak on something is not to blame, even if he is wrong.

* * *

As historian James Morrison has shown, the Winisk (pronounced weenusk, meaning "groundhog") Cree appear in historical accounts as early as 1715, when they are mentioned in the Hudson's Bay Company's York Factory records. The Company opened a summer outpost at the mouth of the Winisk River in 1882, and in 1895 Oblate priests from Fort Albany began to make annual visits there. A church was built in 1900, although the mission was not occupied year-round until 1935. The HBC established a permanent post in 1901, and Revillon Freres traders offered some competition in the period 1915-1927.

Prior to the treaty signing, these Northern Indians had been pleading for assistance (treaty benefits) from the

It was an extension of Treaty 9, but the Winisk Cree had no idea what the details really were ...



Canadian government, for a decade and a half. In 1915 Chief James Stoney of nearby Fort Severn wrote a letter to the Indian Affairs Department, in Cree syllabics, on behalf of his and the Winisk people, "amongst them a good many hard-up widows which need to be helped as soon as possible." He asked for "some help from the Government":

> We would like to join in a Treaty as the other Indians at York Factory on the west of us [in Treaty No. 5], or Albany, Fort Hope, Osnaburgh, Attawapiskat [in Treaty No. 9] on the south of us.
>
> We have never been asked to get into any of these Treaties. We are practically surrounded by these Indians who get help from the Government, and our hunting grounds in this cold northern climate are very poor, and we would be very pleased to be able to join in any of these Treaties.

The Winisk Indians, like those further south who joined Treaty No. 9 in 1905-06, thought of a treaty in terms of tangible assistance. This was certainly in keeping with their history of contacts with fur traders and missionaries. Morrison notes that, as early as 1715, traders at York Factory gave a Winisk Indian a gift of tobacco "to encourage his people to come down to trade." Similarly, Cree elder John Chookomoolin told anthropologist Janice Graham that the first priests "would share their food, their flour and tea even if they didn't have very much."

Prior to 1930, many of the Northern Indians had already been assigned to other Indian bands, and were receiving treaty annuities of four dollars per year. Many Attawapiskat Indians, for example, were paid as members of the Fort Albany band. The term "band," as it is used here, signifies an Indian Affairs administrative unit; the Crees were hunters and gatherers who lived in extended family groups dispersed on the land. The designation of such bands during the treaty making process was arbitrary, and generally corresponded with lists of Indians trading at Hudson's Bay Company posts.

At Winisk, fully one fifth (23) of the 117 Indians trading there in the 1920s were already included on the Fort Albany treaty lists. This may explain why the Winisk Cree repeatedly indicated to the treaty commissioners in 1930, as we shall see, that they knew "perfectly all about this treaty."

We shall examine, in turn, the government's view and the Indians' view of the treaty.

1930 witnessed events of great significance, for commissioners representing the federal and provincial governments were signing a treaty with Ontario's northernmost Indians. The region was so far north that aviation gas had to be shipped from Montreal through Hudson Strait to James Bay, and from there to southwestern Hudson Bay. The Ontario government was unable to provide transportation that summer because its aircraft were required to fight forest fires, so Canada's Department of National Defence provided two Fairchilds 71 cabin planes, military pilots and mechanics. While flying over Ontario's most northerly region, temporarily "out of further touch with the outside world," the pilots were instructed to maintain visual contact at all times. The weather was so stormy that summer that the party's 16 mm. movie camera saw little use.

The arrival of the treaty party at Winisk on Sunday 27 July was definitely something for all to remember. The official party consisted of Ontario's Commissioner Walter C. Cain, the province's Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests; Canada's Commissioner Herbert N. Awrey, an Indian Affairs official who doubled as treaty paymaster; and Dr. John T. O'Gorman.

Low tides and poor weather had caused the party a delay of one and a half days in Fort Severn. The flight to Winisk ran into difficulty when the pilots encountered thick fog and, losing sight of one another, were forced to make emergency landings near the mouth of the Winisk River. Then strong winds and rain immediately punished the newcomers, who were soon rescued by "several agile Indian braves" and taken by canoe four miles upriver, through the rapids to Winisk. It seemed a "lonely ... dreary and depressing" place, but they were warmly received by Hudson's Bay Company factor John Harris.

The 85 Indians present at Winisk were convened early Monday morning, 28 July; the Commissioners "hoped to conclude the work" in one day. The Indians chose three representatives, Xavier Patrick, John Bird and David Sutherland. An Oblate priest, Father Martel, and one William Oman acted as translators. The Commissioners noted that here their "discussions were shorter and explanations fewer"; they found that the Winisk Indians "possessed more knowledge of the terms and conditions of Treaty No. 9 than many members of other bands who had been admitted to treaty twenty-five years ago," and would impatiently interrupt them with: "We know perfectly all about this treaty."

The 1905-06 treaty with the federal Crown, that is the written version, had provided the Indians with eight dollars per person on signing; a perpetual annuity of four dollars per person; reserves of one square mile per family of five; schools and teachers. Each Chief was to receive a flag and a copy of the written treaty. In addition to surrendering all their lands, the Indians agreed to be good citizens and obey the law — including any restrictions on hunting, trapping and fishing which the federal government might adopt; in practice, Ontario also used the treaty to impose provincial game laws. The treaty adhesion of 1929-30 differed from the 1905 version in one important detail, particularly significant with modern plans for hydro-electric development in the North. In addition to their lands, the Indians would relinquish "all islands, islets and rocks, waters and land covered by water."

The treaty was reportedly "readily signed" by the two Commissioners, the three Indians and witnesses. Xavier Patrick was elected Chief, and David Sutherland was chosen as Councillor. Dr. O'Gorman gave the Chief a Union Jack and explained its meaning. The two Commissioners fixed badges to the Chief and Councillor "and counselled them in divers matters."

A feast "of ample proportions" was enjoyed, but not before the Indians requested an invocation from the priest. The Winisk Cree selected the area around an old HBC outpost ("Sousahagen") for their 17 square mile reserve. This location, some 150 miles upriver, was reported to be "a well wooded and good hunting section."

The official report fails to mention the routine distribution of money or the Commissioners' recording of the names of the 85 members of the newly constituted Winisk Band. These paylists are preserved in Indian Affairs' headquarters in Ottawa. The writing of names in a book, synonymous in Cree with taking debt (*i.e.* receiving goods) from the Hudson's Bay Company, would have been nothing out of the ordinary.

July 29 saw "torrential rains," delaying the party once again, but giving the Commissioners an opportunity to express great admiration for the priest as a "human barometer" with an uncanny understanding of atmospheric conditions, a "humble bearing and quiet assurance." Low water and damage to their pontoons caused a second day's wait, and the treaty party finally departed for Attawapiskat on Friday, 1 August.

From the Commissioners' account of events earlier that summer, we can assume that their Winisk report was incomplete. The pilots probably spoke to the Indians about "their overseas [war] experiences, with courageous Canadian volunteer Indians," as they did at English River. Dr. O'Gorman undoubtedly provided some medical attention, and may have lectured them on Western health habits. If weather permitted, there may have been some sports activities. And one of the mechanics, René Gauthier, surely displayed the Houdini-like tricks which earned him the nickname "Wendigo." Clothing and other goods may have been distributed to the elderly. Commissioner Cain likely lectured the Winisk Cree about "the necessity of com-

National Archives of Canada

The treaty party at Winisk, 28 July 1930. Back row, left to right, P. Martel OMI, John Penneshish (Bird), Xavier Shekapoo (Patrick), David Sutherland, John Harris, Ray T. Wheeler of the Hudson's Bay Company. Front row, left to right, Commissioners Walter C. Cain and Herbert N. Awrey.

plying with the fire protection and game laws," while Awrey may have emphasized the importance of frugality and hard work. The written record of the 1930 treaty deliberations, unlike those of 1905-1906, gives little evidence of any "outside promises."

Their trip had become routine, so such omissions are perfectly understandable. The Commissioners' intent, at Winisk and the other locations where "negotiations" and treaty signing took place that summer (Windigo River and Fort Severn), was to give "a thorough explanation of the treaty" and to urge the Indian "leaders to present the case to the entire band and not to agree to a single proposition unless it was clearly understood, since it was the desire of the King's representatives to report understanding and unanimity amongst the Indians." But how *was* all of this understood by the Indians?

We are fortunate, in the case of Winisk (now relocated upriver to Peawanuck), to have a considerable amount of "inside" information on the treaty signing, collected from participants under a variety of circumstances beginning in 1957, 27 years after the event. By then, Winisk was a greatly changed community.

Following the 1930 treaty adhesion, an Indian Agent at Moose Factory visited about once a year. Besides the HBC trader and clerk, an Oblate priest and lay brother permanently resided in the village after 1935. Starting in 1936, some Indian children from Winisk were sent to the Oblates' boarding school at Fort Albany. Ontario's Department of Lands and Forests (now the Ministry of Natural Resources) began visiting in 1947, and an *amisk okimaw* or "beaver boss" (as game wardens are called in Cree) resided there from 1956 to 1958.

But the biggest impact on the Winisk Cree came in 1955, during the Cold War, when a Mid-Canada Line radar base was constructed nearby. Up to 700 white men were there during the early period of its construction. The prospect of wage labour for the 150 Winisk Cree and their neighbours led to a pattern of permanent village residence.

In 1957, near the onset of these changes, one of the key participants in the Winisk treaty (and one of those who had been receiving annuities prior to 1930), David Sutherland, was questioned by an Oblate priest. A translation of the taped interview runs to 35 pages, much of it a free-flowing narrative dealing with "Indian

Life in the Past." The elderly narrator does not indicate the correct year of the signing nor the exact names of any in the treaty party but, despite a disclaimer that he has forgotten much of what happened in 1930, he provides more essential information.

This event, like the arrival of fur traders and priests, had been foretold (at a time when "there was no one to tell them") some generations earlier: "There was talk that money would be granted the moment the people stood on the ground with the Governor." This was really nothing new, because from first contact these generous whites had provided the Indians with clothing, food and numerous implements which assisted them in time of hardship. As David says, "As far as I can recall, the white people were already here to support the natives in survival."

The Winisk Indians were "shocked" by the whitemen's sudden appearance, however, "because it was the first time they had seen an aircraft"; this method of arrival had some parallels to a Cree origin myth of being lowered to Earth from the world above by the great spider.

Prior to 1930, David Sutherland indicates, there was no chief as we know the role today. When necessary, the people would simply appoint an *ad hoc* spokesman such as petitioner James Stoney, someone "capable of discussing whatever word came from the outside." As what linguist C.D. Ellis calls a "useful contact agent with the outside," this pre-treaty leader was likely called an *okimahkan,* or stand-in-chief, as the Cree call their chiefs today. Sutherland describes the first election for this position, which took place in a tent. There were three candidates (the same who deliberated with the commissioners), who "sat there without saying a word" while the people chose Xavier Patrick as Chief, and David Sutherland as Councillor.

He describes a reticent and subordinate role, deferring to more powerful people with respectful talk. Whenever "the chief was asked something, he would readily agree to the word of the Governor." Questioned further on this, David explains:

> He would always agree and never oppose anything. He would not question anything he was informed of, nor anything to be implemented. He agreed to everything said and the people did not question anything; this occurred every time the Indian Agent arrived.

In response to the priest's direct question about "whether you gave up your land in exchange for support," David states "No, we did not. We do not personally know because we were never clearly told." What, then, was discussed?

Until very recently, translator Greg Spence says that the Cree referred to the treaty as *shatamakaywina* or "promises." David Sutherland indicates that the treaty promises were very simple:

> We were told the government would look after us, support us at all time and not deceive us. They told us this so we would readily agree.
>
> It was said that the money received from the government would never run out as long as the sun shines ... and you will be given four dollars every summer.

When the treaty money was distributed (or perhaps when it was reduced from eight dollars to four dollars the next year), "Nobody questioned it." There was no recollection of any promises regarding schooling or Western medical care (which would have had little meaning at the time), but there was a definite pledge to help extinguish forest fires.

David also remembered vague discussions about secular and church laws ("The old man who was the Indian Agent did not do much but talk"), yet expressed the view (prompted in 1957 by the radar base?) that it was wrong to ask an Indian to live like a white man.

David clearly recalled discussions about "another land ... reserved for the people when they can no

Bill Hutchison photo

Tepee on the banks of the Winisk River.

longer trap." The Governor promised to have it surveyed, and also to "send someone right away to build roads" (although there were none by 1957).

Surprisingly, since he is listed as a signatory to the adhesion, David had no recollection of a written agreement. People verbally agreed, and showed their consent to the treaty (*as they understood it*) by waving their hats or scarves, and yelling approval (as the commissioners recorded at Fort Severn). Today, community leaders question why John Bird's surname appears on the adhesion, in Cree syllabics, as the simple English word "Bird" rather than its multi-syllable Cree equivalent *pineshish*. Who did the signing?

James Morrison reports on another important interview, 53 years after treaty time, with a now-deceased

Bill Hutchison photo

John Chookomoolin.

Cree elder named Michael Patrick. A notice had come in the HBC mail informing the people that another boss (*shooneeyan okimaw* or the "money boss," as an Indian Affairs official is still called in Cree) would arrive. It stated that the people would be asked to decide about the land and the four dollars, and that anyone who took the money would also receive the laws. No one could understand what this meant, so they asked his brother Xavier (who apparently had some schooling and knew some English) to represent them.

Michael recalled that the treaty party consisted of an Indian Agent (Awrey) and a doctor, but he recalled Ontario's Mr. Cain as a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman (perhaps confusing the adhesion with stories of the original treaty of 1905-06). He stated that there was no one from Ontario's Department of Lands and Forests, which is understandable; as we have seen, the province did not have a presence at Winisk until much later.

One of the interpreters, William Oman, was a "half-breed" with a different dialect, "brought in from Stranger River" (*mandayo seepee* is the Churchill River). Michael confirms the three candidates for chief, and the selection of his brother Xavier. He also explains what the treaty was understood to entail:

> the government's representative stated that no one wanted to control the lifestyle of the people. The people who relied on the birds would be left in their care and no one would take them away. The animals who walked also were left in their care and no one else could hunt them. No one could dictate terms which would affect their traditional lifestyle. Food, in the form of birds, animals and fish, could still be used by the people. The white man had cattle, gardens and would continue to live this way. The people would also control the trees and use them as in the past. Laws were applied to the land however, in order to take care of it, and to avoid destroying it by fire. It was also stated that anyone not interested in making his own living, who was lazy, could not be helped but those who were skillful and had the ambition to run their lives, would be assisted by the government.

Janice Graham obtained some information from John Chookomoolin of Peawanuck, in the early 1980s, on the election of the first Chief at Winisk. The election was by body ballot ("They stood in groups. The one who favoured one would stand by him. The one with the most would win the election."). Xavier Patrick was chosen because he was "a good hard worker, a good hunter and everything he told his people was good." The Chief and Councillor were each given a badge.

Interviews recorded by the author for the Mushkegowuk Council, through the assistance of George and Dominic Hunter of Peawanuck in May of 1989, add further details. John Chookomoolin provided details of the 1905 treaty at Fort Albany, which he had heard from his mother. He had evidently heard that no agreement was signed by the Indians at Winisk, and expressed concern that their growing membership would require a larger reserve than was allotted them based on the 1930 population. He understood that Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources had created Polar Bear Park in the 1970s in order to "protect the land from the white people," not to restrict native harvesting.

Nancy Patrick, Michael's widow (and sister-in-law to the first treaty chief), repeated her husband's statement that there had been problems with one of the interpreters in 1930. An Attawapiskat woman married to a Winisk hunter, Nancy was already receiving treaty annuities in 1930, when:

> two planes came in from the south (inland). Aboard this plane was the commissioner, legislation from the government, and an Indian agent who had come to distribute treaty money for the first time to the people. This is what the government said when legislation and money were brought in: "This treaty made

> to you is the beginning of the support given that we know of [today]." Along with the support came policy, and all this was given to the people to assist in their lives. It was said then that "the support and the legislation given to the people will continue until the sun no longer shines and the river stops flowing." Back then help was not too great compared with the large amount of aid that is given to an individual now ... The people were poor then, and the store did not have an abundant supply of goods.

She recalls that the chief was "cloaked with the flag." A book was held, but she had no recollection of anyone swearing promises on the Bible (as the Anglican elders of Kashechewan describe at Fort Albany in 1905).

In response to specific questions about the treaty promises (and Dominic's leading statement "I personally think the white people did not uphold their promises made"), Nancy states: "I do not recall any discussion about education. The children were not in school then because the majority of the time was spent on the land and not in the community." Asked again about the treaty, she states "I do not recall hearing about the treaty, although I did hear legislation was introduced."

She states that there was pressure on the Indians "to go settle and develop" their inland reserve, which was later surveyed with stakes marked with the symbol of the flag. The Winisk Crees were differentiated into coasters ("those who preferred survival by living off the shores" and who "were a strong influence") and those who lived inland.

The Commissioners' report makes no reference to the *Migratory Birds Convention Act,* which Canada signed in 1918, unilaterally restricting Indian hunting. Asked about reference to wildlife, Nancy states:

> According to the priest who was interpreting, everything that grows on the land, everything God created, it was all part of the agreement. ... The commissioners did not speak of the animals, however the Ministry of Natural Resources wardens began establishing quotas for the fur-bearing animals. There would be a policy not to kill an animal for maybe two or three years; this was so they could replenish.

Questioned further about the Commissioners' promises regarding animals, however, she says, "The commissioners did not speak of the animals"; game wardens later introduced restrictions only for purposes of conservation.

Summarizing the treaty and the intervening years, she comments:

> The treaty was brought in for the people by the governor of the land, and a lot has happened [differently] from what was actually promised; perhaps the promises made are not possible. I am not the only one with this knowledge, there are others too.

Nancy's sister-in-law, Angela Sutherland, was the first chief's younger sister. She states that the Chief and Council system was introduced in 1930. The reserve was chosen because of its "great abundance of rabbit, fish, caribou, beaver and moose."

Angela says, "There was no support received" from the government prior to 1930. And she suggests that, even then, the aid was minimal: "we lived on fish alone ... The wildlife was the only means of subsistence." (Indian Affairs had, in fact, been reimbursing fur traders for some relief to "destitute Indians" at Winisk, to the tune of over $5,600 between 1923 and 1930. But the source of this aid would have been unknown to the Cree, and unimportant; it merely continued a 200-year custom of gift-giving and sharing, originating in the fur trade.)

Anthropologist Regina Flannery who, with John M. Cooper, conducted fieldwork around James Bay during the 1930s, suggests that the Cree notion of generosity is crucial to explaining their understanding of the treaty:

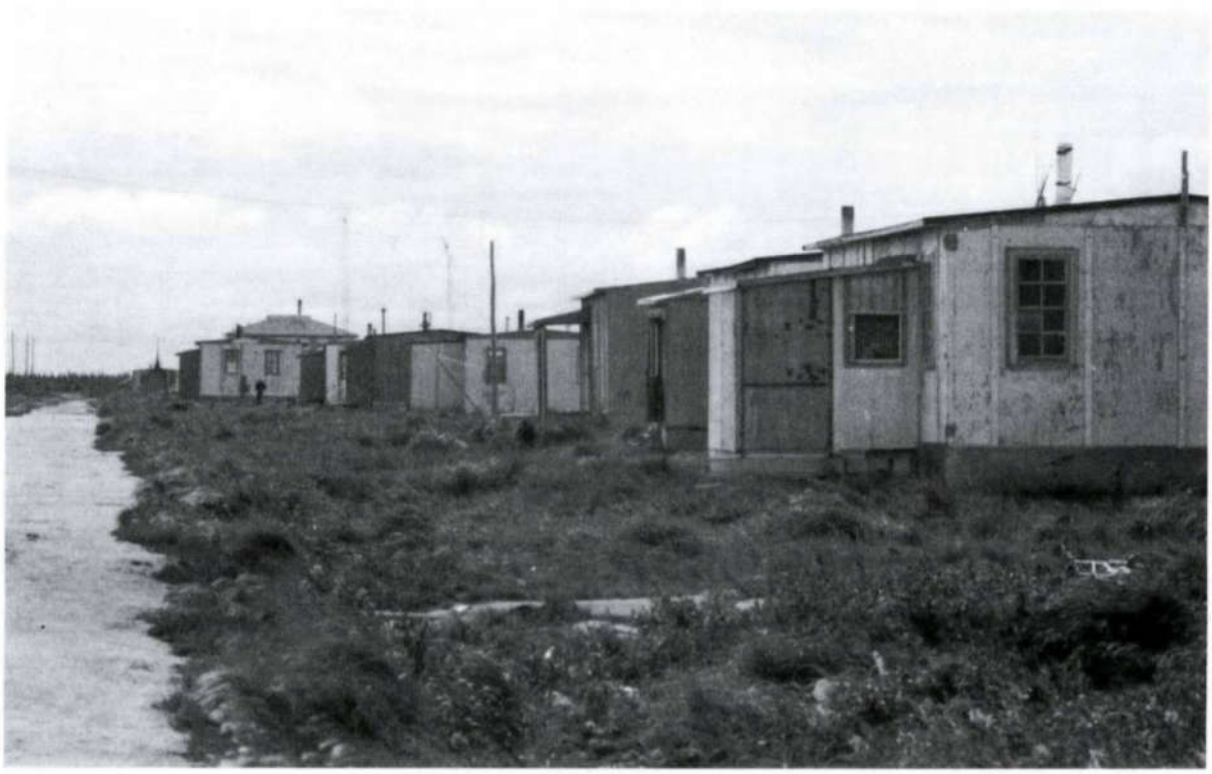
> To the Cree, a generous person was one who shared, especially food, with relatives, the *elderly* and *those in need* [emphasis in original] and did so without expectation of any tangible return. Such a [person] was highly esteemed. ... Consequently, when the promises were made to look after the people and help them, they believed the Crown to be generous *as they understood* "generosity" [emphasis added]. It seems evident that they had no notion they were giving up their land in return for what they were promised.

The encounter of the Winisk Cree with the treaty commissioners in 1930 must be understood within the context of their prior experience as hunters and gatherers. As Flannery remarks:

> At the time of the Treaty, the value of the land rested mainly in its resources of wildlife on which the Cree depended for their livelihood. ... Since it was expected that the natives would continue to exploit the resources of their land, they could not have known that they were "surrendering" their territory. Their understanding was that if these resources were depleted they could then depend on a "generous" government to come to their aid.

She finds that, at Winisk, David Sutherland's detailed recollection about how the reserve was selected

> adds to the reliability of his understanding that the reserve was for those who could no longer trap and that they had no notion they were giving up their land.



Bill Hutchison photo

The Winisk community today.

It is obvious that the terms of the written treaty were not explained. To a people still hunting, fowling, trapping and fishing, they would have perceived at once that one square mile of land would not suffice for the support of an individual, never mind a family of five. In any case, the nuclear family was not the norm. Traditionally the winter hunting group was composed of two or more males and their families, most often father and sons; and they required many, many square miles of territory to carry out their subsistence activities. Even so, the threat of starvation was always present.

Under these conditions, the people could not have known that they "surrendered" all but 17 square miles of their territory or the limitations imposed on the reserve.

For more than two centuries the Cree had exchanged their furs for trade goods. What were they giving the treaty commissioners in return for their gifts of money and food? Anthropologist Richard Preston suggests that they gave them the responsibility to look after them in times of need, as fur traders and priests had done.

With Confederation in 1867, and the Rupert's Land transfer in 1870, Canada would become, for the Crees, the new "governor of the land." In Canadian law, the boundary extension of 1912 gave Ontario ownership of their lands. But for the Cree, Ontario was not the owner of the land nor the animals, any more than the Hudson's Bay Company had been in earlier times.

In the eyes of the Crown, the Indians' aboriginal title created a legal burden on the land, which they intended that the adhesion would remove, like topsoil. For the Cree, the Crown's agent, the "money boss," would carry on the fur trade tradition of providing help, relieving them of their occasional burden in finding the means of survival as they lived off the land.

In Ontario today, government guidelines for self-government negotiations exclude any discussion of treaty rights. But as John Chookomoolin says, "With the people now discussing the need to administer their own affairs, I wonder how that is to be if they gave up their land without knowing it." In 1930, he says, the Winisk Cree were unfamiliar with English and unassertive:

> The people did not speak out in the past as I have witnessed this when a representative from the government was speaking and all the people kept saying "yes." Some elders said the white man would do whatever he wished to do, whether it helped us or not; it was his prerogative. It was better to agree because we did not have any authority.

If they were respectfully submissive to powerful whites, when speaking in their own language, among themselves, the Cree "did not have much problems with heated exchanges." Today's younger generation of

bilingual leaders, "have begun to think about what affects them in their lives and ... in the future," John says, they "will be very outspoken."

The issue of who controls the land, especially Polar Bear Provincial Park, is a major concern of the Winisk Cree today. In early 1990, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources sent an information bulletin to the western James and Hudson Bay Cree communities, explaining the requirements for work permits on Ontario Crown land. An angry young Councillor, John Chookomoolin's grandson Sam Hunter of Peawanuck, wrote to the Minister, the Hon. Lynn McLeod, rejecting the policy's applicability on the Weenusk First Nation's "traditional lands."

The Minister's reply cited Ontario's *Public Lands Act* as authority for the policy, and asserted that any person contemplating "work on Crown land" was indeed "required to obtain a work permit." She went on, however, to recognize the crux of the problem:

> While it is the Ministry of Natural Resources' position that the land (apart from reserve land) which was the subject of the James Bay Treaty No. 9 is Crown (Ontario) land, we recognize that the Weenusk Band ... may have a different understanding of the Treaty. The resolution of this difference in understanding is one of the challenges facing all parties concerned.

Cree oral tradition indicates that the question of the Winisk Crees' aboriginal title was not disposed of "once and for all." It was not cleared "off the boards." Flannery says:

> The gap between the written Treaty and the Crees' understanding of the oral promises is truly shocking.
>
> I cannot find any indication ... that the terms set forth in the written Treaty were ever clearly explained.

The issue still remains a burden, for the Crown and for the Cree.

*

Without the testimony of David Sutherland, Michael Patrick, John Chookomoolin, Nancy Patrick and Angela Sutherland, our understanding of treaty making at Winisk would be very one-sided. Through George Hunter of Peawanuck the author became aware of the David Sutherland interview; Father Vezina of the Roman Catholic mission in Attawapiskat kindly provided us with a copy. Dominic Hunter facilitated and acted as initial translator in taping John Chookomoolin, Nancy Patrick and Angela Sutherland. I have also benefitted from discussing this article with Sam Hunter and Chief Abraham Hunter. Greg Spence of Mushkegowuk Council is responsible for translating the 1957 and 1989 interviews; I am also grateful for his thoughts on treaty-making. I am indebted to Regina Flannery and Richard J. Preston for their insights and analysis, and to Janice Graham and James Morrison for their earlier research, including interviews of John Chookomoolin and Michael Patrick. The late Bill Hutchison of Moosonee provided photos (and helpful comments). Thanks to the leaders of Peawanuck for allowing me to tell this story. ◆

Bill Hutchison photo

Nancy Patrick.

Historian John S. Long has written extensively on aboriginal-white relations. He lives at Timmins, Ontario.

The Beaver in Art

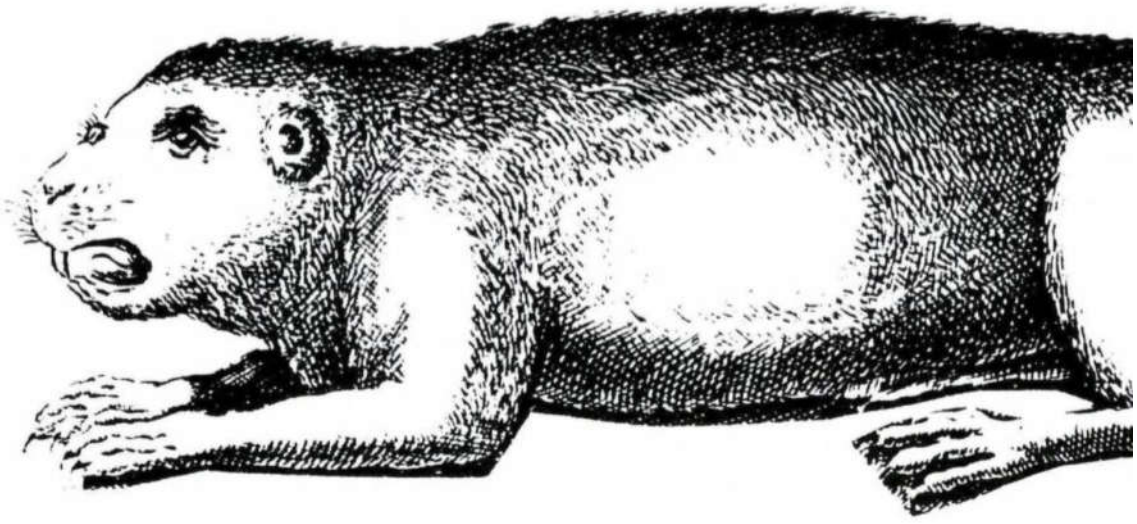
By Marius Barbeau

Canada was not at first the only home of the beaver, as its present habitat and its role in our colonial history might lead one to believe. Horace T. Martin, in his *Castorologia,* states that the beaver is mentioned in the hieroglyphs of the Egyptians and in sacred writ of Solomon, also in the records of Germany in 1103; that there were beaver preserves in Poland in the sixteenth century, and that at that time the beaver could be found in parts of Great Britain; that it still existed on the Elbe River in 1725, and has survived to this day in remote wilds in Scandinavia. In North America its habitat was more extensive than that of any other animal: it once reached as far south as Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Arctic oceans.

Its two names "castor" and "beaver" seem to have come from the Mediterranean: the Greeks called it *castor* (from *gastro,* the stomach); and the Latins, *biber,* the French *beavre,* and the Anglo-Saxon, *boefer.* Its properties were not confined to the cultural use of its pelt, for which it became famous, after the discovery of America; they included medical attributes: the meat was extensively consumed, and the tail was a delicacy — its "flavour and appearance resemble those of the choicest bacon"; its incisors, hafted on a handle, were used by the Indians as fine cutting tools. It became such an important item in the fur trade that beaver skins became the standard of exchange. As early as 1694, Captain James Knight wrote from Albany: "Beavor beeing the chief Commodity we receive in the trade of these goods we therefore make it the standard whereby we rate all the other Firrs and Commodities We deal for Tradeing."

Some Indian tribes made the beaver their clan name or emblem. Among the Onondagas (an Iroquoian nation), the Beaver clan was more important than the Bear's; among the Wyandots of Ontario, some personal names, still remembered, go back to their Beaver clan.

From "Voyages du Baron de Lahontan dans l'Amerique septentrionale", La Haye, 1706. National Archives of Canada.



An Algonkian tribe of Lake Huron, the Amihonas, were the "People of the Beaver"; and a leading clan of the Tsimsyan and the Haidas, on the North Pacific coast, claimed the Beaver as their totem.

On the trail of the Indians, some white people in Canada adopted the beaver as their emblem or their name. First, among them, were the sixteen foundation members of the North-West Company in Montreal; Joseph Frobisher resided in "Beaver Hall," which is still the name of the same section in the centre of the city. Montreal fur traders formed the Beaver Club, and a gold medal engraved with the figure of a beaver was their badge; a similar badge, embroidered, was also applied on the woven Assomption sashes of the bourgeois. The North-West Company, about 1820, issued beaver tokens, a form of coinage only a few pieces of which, highly valued, have been saved by antiquarians.

It should not be forgotten, by the way, that a few families in Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany, had previously used the beaver on their coat-of-arms; and a seal for the New Netherlands, dated 1623-1674, bears the profile of a beaver across its shield.

It is not surprising therefore to find that Indians and non-Indians alike have appropriated the beaver as an emblem and also as a theme in decorative arts.

The pictorial or plastic quality of the beaver varies according to the cultural backgrounds of the people who have ventured to use it as a theme. To interpret the beaver interestingly is by no means an easy undertaking, for the animal — a crawling, ungainly rodent, short-legged and bulging with fat, with a disproportionate scaly tail — does not lend itself to imagery.

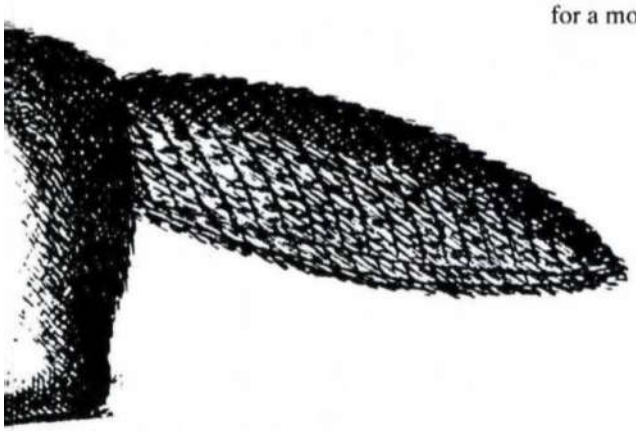
Only artists with highly creative skill could impart to the beaver distinctive features worth preserving in the pantheon of art. Indeed, most of the Europeans and eastern Canadians who have tried their hand at it have failed to invest it with much dignity in its many appearances on coats-of-arms and symbols at home or abroad. Sailors, in the last war [1914-1918] superstitiously refused to cross the seas on a ship the prow of which was decorated with the beaver as a symbol of Canada, because it looked like a rat, and rats, boring through the hull, can sink a ship. The noted craftsman Paul Beau, when confronted with the task of fashioning a wrought-iron beaver upholding the Speaker's inkstand in the House of Commons at Ottawa, failed to discover any arresting picture of this animal east of the Rockies, but was satisfied with a bold carving of the beaver on a totem of the North Pacific Coast for a model.

The beaver in Canadian art, indeed, falls under two headings: The Eastern beaver, quite realistic — usually in profile, lying on a branch and gnawing; and the Western beaver, squatting or sitting erect, often gnawing a stick while holding it in its front paws, showing its characteristic incisors and checker tail, and so highly stylized that it is unrecognizable to the untrained eye.

The early pictures of beaver in our Eastern annals all show a lack of skill in their makers. Although they are realistic, they are not striking likenesses. Their most interesting feature is their direct and usually naive approach.

Perhaps the first, in miniature, is on Champlain's map, dated 1612, executed by David Pelletier from a drawing by the founder of Quebec himself.

More interesting is the effigy on the North-West Company beaver token of 1820, because of its stylization in good taste. This picture of the beaver must have been everywhere familiar enough at the time to influence later conceptions, which



A 'Beaver' Treasury

Charles Marius Barbeau (1883-1969), an enthnologist, was born at Ste. Marie de Beauce, Quebec, and was educated at Laval University, Oxford and the Sorbonne in Paris. He served as an ethnologist and folklorist with the National Museum of Canada from 1911 to 1949. He was a prolific collector of songs and stories and published 50 books and numerous articles. He once said "I would need two lives to process all my research". This article was published in *The Beaver* for September 1941 and is one of a series to be reprinted during the magazine's 75th anniversary year.

all bear a certain resemblance to it, whether the profile is turned to the left or to the right. Yet there is surprisingly little left of the beaver imagery in our archives of the fur trade; for instance, the silver beavers made for the Indians are all but lost to us, save in an item like this in an account of Robert Cruickshank, a Montreal silversmith and merchant: "North-West Company, Outfit 1799 ... 75 Turtles, 75 Beavers. ..."

The beaver on the Champlain map of 1612.

After the North-West company had merged with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 its beaver crest fell into public domain, as it were, and after a while it was taken over by institutions or individuals. It has since become a virtual symbol of Canada. It was used restrictively in one quarter of the shield in the coat-of-arms of the city of Saint John, New Brunswick, as can be seen on the valuable wood carving by

North-West Company token, circa 1820. Bank of Canada Museum.

"The beaver and his famous lodges", 1755.

MacDonald, dated 1823, in the old courthouse.

After the 1837 insurrection in Eastern Canada, the beaver became unofficially a national emblem, at least among the French Canadians; its familiar profile ever since has been reproduced in many places.

The beaver profile, turned to the left or the right, has been a familiar folk design for many years among the habitants and the Indians of the St. Lawrence valley. At Indian Lorette, it was nicely embroidered with dyed moose hair on moccasins and on cushions; and among the northern Algonkians it appears among the designs scratched off the inner bark of the birch.

In the sensational exhibition of "The Indian Arts of the United States" at the Museum of Modern Art this year [1941] in New York, animal and plant forms "in designs created on birch bark" were displayed; and the catalogue calls attention to their merit, in particular that of the beaver, in the following words: "Natural forms were often highly conventionalized in this region, and the realism of the bear, beaver and caribou on this box is exceptional." The box was made about 1890 and collected in 1925.

A maple-sugar maker of Gaspé once, not so long ago, made a mould in the form of a squatting beaver gnawing a stump; and a sugar cake cast from it, now preserved at the National Museum, discloses quite an original treatment. Habitant women also include the beaver in hooked rug designs, occasionally well stylized.

One of the most interesting Quebec beavers can be seen on the large sign-board carved in high relief and painted, about 1870, by the noted wood-carver Jean-Baptiste Coté, now at the Quebec Museum; it is turned to the right, semi-upright, and its body is arched in an effort suggesting industry; the whole sign-board being under the caption of "Progress."

The only outstanding interpretation of the beaver in northeastern art is embodied in a cup carved out of a maple knot, about seventy-five years ago, by a nameless craftsman of the St. Maurice River in the Province of Quebec. Brought back from that district by a Quebec surveyor named Williams and preserved since in his family, it belongs to a type of carving still practised there, perhaps by halfbreeds. The three beavers, under the cup and the handle, are recognizable and well stylized; they are true art, no less than the fish engraved around them, the fiddle head of the handle, and the small kneeling man, at the end of a neat leather braid.

"Armes des Hurons", from an old print.

Except for this last beaver, none of the Eastern pictures or carvings can compare in quality with the beaver totems or decorations of the Indians on the North Pacific Coast. We enter here upon a field where true art is ingrained among the people and quite widespread. These Asiatic-like Indians are, indeed, among the most creatively artistic people in any part of the world.

The interpretations of the beaver, the majority of them heraldic, are

Split beaver on totem pole at Kitwanga, British Columba.

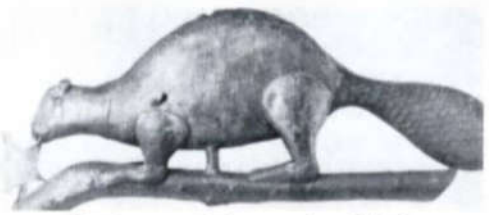
too numerous to be listed or fully described. They are embodied on some of the best totem poles of the Skeena, the Nass, and on the Queen Charlotte Islands; on delicately carved Niska head-dresses for head-chiefs of the Eagle clan; on argillite carvings of the Haidas; engraved on silver bracelets, and horn spoon handles; painted on ancient house fronts, on woven root hats, on gambling mats and on leather leggings; or woven by the Tsimsyan into woollen dancing aprons. The beaver totems and head-dresses as we know them do not antedate 1860, and most of the specimens preserved in museums are more recent.

Most of these beavers — like many other totemic animals in the same area — are of a heraldic character; they are the exclusive property of chiefs and families to whom they belong as coats-of-arms; they are symbolic. Yet there are not a few exceptions, particularly from the hands of Haidas who, for over a hundred years have carved small argillite or slate figures, silver or gold bracelets, carved dishes in the shape of animals, spoons of mountain goat horn, and large cedar chests, for European seamen, traders and visitors. These craftsmen, concerned with the requirements of a foreign clientele, made free of the crest system, and combined together animal figures, including the beaver, without much regard for their significance among their own people.

The impetus to adopt the beaver crest seems to have developed, after 1840, among the leaders of the

Ceremonial chest from Skeena River, British Columbia, in the National Museum Collection.

Argillite totem pole, two feet high. The middle figure represents a beaver. From the Hudson's Bay Company collection.



Weather vane with beaver and maple leaf, L'Assomption County, Quebec.

Figure of a beaver from a monograph of 1685. From "Castorologia".

Standing beaver pole, 18 feet high, erected about 1875-1880 at Massett, British Columbia.

Eagle clan, in the group of Legyarh and Wiyae, of the Tsimsyans and the Haidas. Among the Tsimsyans, only the highest chiefs of the Eagle clan were entitled to show the beaver erect; the lower members of the clan showed it in a squatting or horizontal position, or again, head down.

Notable examples of the standing beaver may be seen on two of the finest poles ever erected on the North Pacific Coast — the Eagle's Nest, and the Beaver-Halibut pole, both at Gitiks on the lower Nass River. The first of these two poles now stands in the zoological park at Charlesbourg, near Quebec.

Legyarh and his several kinsmen, after having risen to power through war-like ventures and the fur trade, induced the Hudson's Bay Company to establish trading posts in their midst, under their aegis. Because of this association with the Company, whose standard of exchange was the beaver skin, it was perhaps natural for them to add the beaver to their own eagle totem.

The Eagle-Beaver clan of the canyon of the Skeena, being closely related to that of Legyarh, figured in the foreground for a period, after the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company on the adjacent coast. Engaging in a quarrel with his powerful kinsman Legyarh, over toll rights at the canyon, the chief of this local clan finally went down to defeat, but not before he had erected at least a totem pole displaying the beaver, and having conferred upon the clan a legend of origin, which is still the only native account available for the beaver totem anywhere.

Strange visitors, according to the myth of origin, mysteriously caused the death of some people at the canyon of the Skeena. They were pursued up the hillside to a lake, about Kitsalas, at Kwit'awren (Gravel-heart, or according to another interpretation, Cracked-stones). There, changing into beavers, they disappeared under the water. The people drained the lake, with the help of some of their Gitsemraelem relatives, and discovered the huge beaver at the bottom, the body of which was covered with human faces. Gip-ranaa'o and Larh'ayaeorh, ancestors of the Kitwanga Eagles, assisted the Kitsalas people in overcoming and killing the monster. After they had drawn its body to the shore, they cut it in two parts, thus dividing it among themselves, half for Gitsemraelem and the other for Kitsalas. The beaver thereafter became the crest of the captors. Sometimes it is shown complete, in a sitting posture; at other times, as once on the taller pole here, it is represented split in two halves. It is usually represented, at Kitsalas, its head down and with human-like faces all over its body.

Armorial bearings of the Hudson's Bay Company, with beavers prominently displayed.

A beaver in your pocket.

Now that the beaver has become firmly established as the faunal emblem of Canada, each year will see new representations of its familiar figure in various forms of Canadian art. But it is doubtful if any will be better known than its image on the George VI five-cent piece. ◆

Sir Ernest, in Person

By Ken Winters

SIR ERNEST MacMILLAN
The Importance of Being Canadian

By Ezra Schabas. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1994. 374 pp., illus. $39.00.

"There had been two motivating forces in his life", writes Ezra Schabas in the final pages of his biography, "his Presbyterian sense of social responsibility and community, and, emanating from that, his resolve to convert musical Canada from a colony to a nation ... The 1940s and 1950s were the decades when Canadian music had finally found itself, and no one had contributed to the process more than Ernest MacMillan".

Schabas then modestly tops his own accurate assessment of the man whose life he has spent more than 300 pages describing with a more elegant though also accurate assessment of MacMillan by the novelist and music-lover Robertson Davies: "It is on the achievement of such men that a culture of a country rests. To say that they teach us is a poor description of what they do, for in reality they reveal to us things that we are eager to know but which we cannot understand unaided. Their work is not education, but revelation, and there is always about it something of prophetic splendour. Sometimes, before they die they become heroes of legend, and when they die we are aware not of loss, but only of a growing splendour in the legend."

These two statements — the one conscientiously forthright and unassuming, the other poetic in its added dimension and insight — tell us why Sir Ernest MacMillan was not just an anachronistic "title" but a real knight, with all that ancient term implies of chivalry, courage, dedication to life-enhancing causes,

Sir Ernest MacMillan by Amice Calverley.

generosity, and the taking of responsibility. They also tell us a lot about how Ezra Schabas has gone about the timely job of telling us MacMillan's important story before it falls away completely into the ever-widening abyss of public amnesia. MacMillan died in 1973, virtually a generation ago. Schabas' biography, in gathering together the dangling threads of living memory, has caught his life for us just in the nick of time.

In the writing, Schabas has taken an unaffected middle road between careful documentation and the straightforward telling of a well-furnished pioneer story. To be sure, Schabas is not a Michael Holroyd, delving down and down into the psychological recesses and up and up into the spheres and stratospheres of the genius of a Bernard Shaw, in a prose which races neck and neck with his subject's own. Neither is Schabas a Victoria Glendinning, immersing her consciousness, with uncanny intuition, in the complex person of another — a West, a Sitwell, a Trollope. Schabas the musical biographer is more modest and more pragmatic than these great literary biographers. His MacMillan is chapter and verse of a man who deserves to be the Canadian "hero of legend" that Davies described. It does analyze, it has insights, but its first aim is to bring us awareness of what we are in danger of forgetting about a man who made a huge contribution to music in Canada. The story is large and fascinating, and we get almost all of it: MacMillan's pioneering achievements as orchestral and choral conductor, as director of the major anglo-Canadian music-educational institutions, as virtuoso organist, as composer, as folksong collector, annotator and arranger, as (in Ralph Vaughan Williams' definition of genius) the right man in the right place at the right time. Schabas, who has pursued his own considerable career (as clarinetist, teacher, senior music administrator, consultant and writer) in the very city and among the very institutions that MacMillan dominated and fos-

tered, is able to tell MacMillan's story knowledgeably and idiomatically, with an insider's grasp of Canadian musical mores. Reading it I never feel, as I did in Otto Friedrich's biography of Glenn Gould, that the author has dropped in on his subject like a journalist from Mars, landing gingerly on Earth and, with the best and most intelligent will in the world, picking up the wrong end of every third or fourth stick in his path. Schabas, I always feel, knows what he's writing about, and at the same time he knows himself well enough occasionally to defer. In addition to incorporating Davies' view of MacMillan-the-prophet, he brings in first-Canada-Council-chairman Albert Trueman's graceful picture of MacMillan-the-sage: "I recall him", wrote Trueman, "as a quiet though by no means retiring member of the Council, a gentle and understanding compassionate man, who talked reason, never with lifted voice, never in passionate argument. Sir Ernest was a strong man, secure in the eminent position he occupied, learned and wise, but never using his strength to beat down the opposition, and never using his learning and wisdom to embarrass others."

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Schabas defers, too, to the sane and often humorous voice of MacMillan himself. From MacMillan's perceptive 1939 address to the Vancouver Institute on "Hitler and Wagnerism", to his perky jingle in the style of Longfellow on music-festival adjudicators (of which he was one), to his letters to his wife, Elsie, the man is here, in person. In all of this, and in Schabas' scrupulous narrative, the portrait of MacMillan is a fine likeness. Schabas gives us MacMillan's public life fully, fairly and in detail, warts and all (including the painful Royal Conservatory controversy, and the notorious affair with the Symphony Six, when MacMillan dropped "socialist" members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at the U.S. border, giving in to the prevailing McCarthyist paranoia so that the orchestra could perform at Carnegie Hall). As a chronicle, therefore, Schabas' book will be the prime source and fulcrum of MacMillan studies for the foreseeable future. To this end, also, it is richly furnished with footnotes, bibliography, a list of MacMillan's own writings, a selected list of MacMillan's musical works, a discography and a useful index. In the firm organization of all this, one feels the hand of Schabas' wife, Ann, who worked closely with him as a highly skilled researcher and bibliographer, and to whom he has dedicated the book.

My only cavil about the book concerns not the amplitude and excellence of what is here but the small but nagging sense of what is not. In what perhaps, alas, is a very Canadian attitude ("least said easiest mended") Schabas' probe of MacMillan's private life stops at the borders of a conventionally ideal domesticity. Nothing extra or other is presumed or even supposed, let alone discussed. In this era of sophisticated biographical candour when even musicians, living relatives notwithstanding, are allowed a little chiaroscuro, an occasional human lapse or scherzo, or even whole lurid agendas of private behaviour, we can only wonder why Sir Ernest, no plaster saint in other regards, is represented here as personally a spotless paragon. This single smooth blank wall in an otherwise intriguing and many-textured biographical architecture is very "Canadian" but it remains frustrating for the reader in search of a whole hero. It reminds me that while I admire and acknowledge those chronicles of a great public life that are properly here, my favourite parts of Schabas' book are the human parts: MacMillan the person, imprisoned in Germany and making a musical life out of his incarceration; MacMillan interacting with his family and colleagues and friends; MacMillan doing all he can, in the kindest way, for wonderful

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young talents like Lois Marshall, Jon Vickers, James Milligan; MacMillan alight with some questing musical enthusiasm, such as collecting and annotating folksongs with Marius Barbeau; MacMillan making up nonsense verse for his friends and his children; MacMillan clowning for the camera (and by the way, the illustrations in the book are a wonderful selection, full of MacMillan's own genuine charisma, and rich in the presences of other great names who shared his era).

There are many anecdotes, and they have for me the ring of truth, possibly because they recall one (not in the book) that I heard years ago in Winnipeg from the composer W.H. Anderson. Anderson had come to Canada from England as a young man, and like many others of his generation he tended to set nature verses by English poets in his songs and choral pieces. MacMillan, visiting Winnipeg as a competition-festival adjudicator, heard some of these settings in the vocal and choral classes. He remarked kindly but firmly that he thought it was about time Canadian composers began setting words "about our own flora and fauna". This observation, simple enough on the face of it, struck home with Anderson, who thereupon did turn his attention to Canadian poets and did begin setting their words.

In such small ways did Canada's musical identity extricate itself from colonialism. In such small — and many very much larger — ways did Ernest MacMillan assist with the extrication and development of that identity. We have owed him this book and Ezra Schabas has provided it. ◆

Ken Winters was an editor of the "Encyclopedia of Canadian Music". A critic and writer, he is host of the CBC radio program "Mostly Music".

Political Pantheon

By J.E. Rea

RIGHT HONOURABLE MEN
The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Mulroney

By Michael Bliss. Harper Collins, Toronto, 1994. 336 pp., illus. $29.00.

Well, didn't we all know that Mackenzie King was our greatest prime minister? Bruce Hutchison told us that in 1952 in *The Incredible Canadian.* He was pooh-poohed at the time, especially by King's former cabinet colleagues, and reminded that only time would allow a proper assessment. Now, through the prism of the last fifty years, Michael Bliss renders the same judgement in this new and very readable book on some of the prime ministers. But more of King later.

This is lively, popular history written for a broad public from high school students to political science graduates. If academic historians don't like it — and many will not — I suspect that Bliss will simply echo Pierre Trudeau: "Tough!" Even so it must be pointed out that the book is idiosyncratic to a fault, confidently assertive and self-indulgently iconoclastic. But it probably deserves to be widely read and it will be — on more than one level.

The sketches of the prime ministers will draw most readers as they measure their own heroes and villains against the author's assessments. Macdonald remains the back-slapping, boozy scoundrel playing the political game within the narrow definitions of his time. Laurier is still the gallant knight, likeable rather than admirable, hopefully leading the country into its beckoning century and presiding over a fifteen-year economic boom. He was the "First Canadian" because he was never English or French enough. But the adulation was not universal, as witness a little Nova Scotia girl's prayer: "Now, O God, take care of yourself, for if we lose you we shall only have Laurier left to take care of us and he is not doing as well as papa expected he would do". Robert Borden appears to have been elevated to the first rank. His performance during the Great War draws praise that at times approaches tub-thumping patriotism. It is probably deserved. But at the same time the author does not explain (or even explain away) Borden's extraordinary commitment to provide an overseas army, in the field, of 500,000 from a country of just over 8,000,000; Charles Stacey's numbers notwithstanding.

Nothing too unexpected to this point, but from here on it is very much the author's agenda. Alexander Mackenzie (1873-1878) is ignored. The "Unknown Prime Ministers" of the 1890s — Abbott, Thompson, Bowell and Tupper — remain in obscurity and will soon be joined by Turner and Campbell and probably Joe Clark, though Bliss exhibits a soft spot for the life-long politician who seems motivated only by good, if often misplaced, intentions. Louis St. Laurent, despite his nine years in office and some rather significant accomplishments, is treated rather summarily in an epilogue to a second chapter on King, a kind of *dénouement* of Liberalism in decline.

But poor old Arthur Meighen who was never elected prime minister and served less than two years in

that position is singled out for half a chapter of vigorous bashing. "Roger Graham [Meighen's biographer], Eugene Forsey, and a few other admirers [Bliss writes] later gave him a wholly undeserved reputation as a great Conservative". At his worst, Bliss argues, Meighen "furthered the decline of parliamentary debate in the twentieth century". Perhaps it is simply a matter of taste or opinion; but if one wanted copious evidence of Meighen's power as a parliamentary opponent, one need only read the quaking entries in the diary of Bliss's hero King for the proof. Sharing the chapter and some of the odium with Meighen is R.B. Bennett whose fate was determined by the depression over which he unluckily presided. Professor Bliss seems to approve the recent revisionist attempts to cast Bennett as a "progressive-conservative" committed to activist government but then, curiously, he details two pages of apparently contradictory evidence.

Willie King, "the greatest and most interesting" of our prime ministers, is given two chapters, such was his impact on our national life. I have no real quarrel with that decision; but in his enthusiasm for King, Bliss pushes his evidence terribly hard. And much of that evidence comes from King's diary, surely the most incredible document in Canadian history. As anyone who has read a few thousand pages will attest, you can prove almost anything by it. Selective evidence becomes an occupational hazard and it is somewhat presumptuous to forestall criticism by castigating "all those who misread the diaries". Bliss is very likely correct in judging that the diary was "a catharsis for [King's] loneliness"; but did he have to lie to it?

King's accomplishments were many and not simply because, in Frank Underhill's puckish phrase, "he divided us least". However reluctantly, King made the government of Canada responsible for the welfare of its people. He brought us successfully through the Second World War and laid the groundwork for the most impressive period of sustained growth in our history. There is much to praise in King's stewardship and it is thus more difficult to understand why the author feels compelled to paint the lily.

To imply as Bliss does that J.W. Dafoe of the *Manitoba Free Press* could be co-opted by a patronage jaunt to an Imperial Conference shows little understanding of Dafoe or the West at the time. On the matter of the admission of Jewish

Mr. King's Christmas card for 1938.

refugees fleeing the Nazis, Bliss writes that "King was more liberal than many of his advisors ... But he allowed himself to be persuaded that the voices advising a restrictive policy, especially those emanating from Quebec, were too strong to be resisted". In fact, the Minister of Immigration took the plight of the Jews to cabinet on three separate occasions and each time King fell in with the stony-hearted but politically sensitive majority, English and French, who would not bend. What King said and did in Council could often come out differently in his diary in the evening.

The account of the conscription issue in the Second World War is conventionally facile. The author suggests that it was essentially a matter of timing, that when it became demonstrably necessary King would act "to keep units at proper fighting strength". The critical failure, it could be argued otherwise, came in the winter of 1941-42 when King and a majority in Cabinet failed to exercise adequate control over the ambitions of the Army. Once committed to an Army of five divisions plus supporting troops in Europe, the crisis was virtually inevitable.

Bliss concludes that King "did a good job both as a politician and as a human being" and overall was "invariably considerate and thoughtful". I doubt that his long-time cabinet colleagues would find their annual Christmas card sufficient solace for a year of manipulation. And the old man could be downright vindictive on occasion. But on balance, Bliss' summary of King's qualities over a lengthy career — "high intelligence, immense knowledge of government and politics, canniness, wariness, and utter dedication to his calling" — is hard to fault.

John Diefenbaker is given his chapter and his due. Magnificent as Opposition Leader, he was plagued by indecision, doubt and paranoia as first minister. He had won the largest parliamentary majority to that point and frittered it away as he alienated one constituency after another — Quebec, Newfoundland, even Tory Toronto. Maybe he was just plain unlucky. Even when he made the correct decision, as in cancelling the AVRO Arrow, he suffered for it.

About the Pearson government, Bliss is understandably ambivalent. "Mike" Pearson was a nice man, our most successful diplomat, and a terrible politician whose government seemed afflicted in turn by bouts of incompetence and sleaziness. He is rightly criticized by the author for

his failure to exercise even rudimentary control. Was there any substance behind this unedifying facade? According to Bliss, King was the originator of the Canadian welfare state (despite the carping of the CCF/NDP). But this is less than fair to Pearson who certainly deserves better than to be remembered as "not much of a reformer" or dismissed as a "fair weather reformer". King put unemployment insurance and family allowances on the books, but quite readily threw in the towel in 1946 when faced with greater challenges. Pearson was prime minister for five years and never had a majority. Yet he left behind a comprehensive pension plan, medicare, a new flag, integration of the armed forces, sectoral free trade in the Autopact agreement, bilingualism in the civil service, and launched Royal Commissions on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and the Status of Women which are still profoundly shaping the country. Not a bad record.

Pierre Trudeau ranks just behind King and well ahead of everyone else in Professor Bliss' pantheon. We are given a tough, almost unlovely portrait of Trudeau; the brittle intelligence, the utter self-assurance and his single-minded commitment to a conception of Canada shared by few Canadians. Those who saw the image of Trudeau seated on the reviewing stand at the St. Jean Baptiste parade just prior to the election of 1968, refusing to flee the hail of missiles which drove all the others away, never forgot it. And however that action may have been misinterpreted, it surely helped to swell the tidal wave of Liberal success. But as Bliss makes clear, Trudeau was a man of paradox, the urbane elitist devoted to individual rights, the citizen of the world who understood little of the country next door. He never held the affection of Canadians but they could not deny him their respect.

The chapter on Mulroney — the "throwback" — is an extended essay on political failure. The nadir (or perhaps the triumph?) comes when the people smite their masters by rejecting the Charlottetown Accord. Indeed, Mulroney's career as prime minister is intended to be the proof of the author's pudding.

The sub-title, "The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Mulroney", very much conditions Professor Bliss' conception of our political history. "Descent" does not refer to the passage of time nor a deterioration in quality of our leaders, though Bliss might be hard put to defend such an assertion if it were not for King and Trudeau. He finds in the careers of our prime ministers a working out of North American democracy in Canada; a passage of power from Burkean elitism to the people. Thus the expectations of the people are constantly rising, faster than the capacity of politicians to respond. So also must the standard of judgement change.

But Bliss goes on to argue that as the limits of power contract and Canadians — better educated, more articulate, and no longer willing to be manipulated — demand a wider right to judge, a new politics is necessary. He also suggests that forms as well as substance must also change. The anachronism of the monarchy has had an increasingly uncomfortable home in North America and even representative parliamentary government may have outlived its welcome. If our future means a sort of plebiscitary democracy we are in for a wild ride. ◆

J.E. Rea is Professor of History, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

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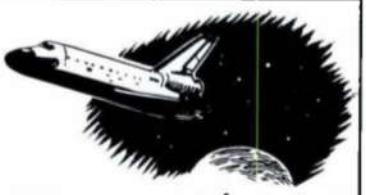
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Supping with the Devil

By Robert Saunders

REPORTING THE NATION'S BUSINESS
Press-Government Relations during the Liberal Years, 1935-1957

By Patrick H. Brennan. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1994. 250 pp., illus. $45.00 hardcover, $18.95 paper.

Amid the drama of John Diefenbaker's rise to power in the late 1950s there occurred an incident — it might be dubbed the affair of the Hutchison interview — which although trivial in itself was, nonetheless, illuminating.

It will be recalled that in late January of 1958 Lester Pearson, leading the newly-defeated Liberals, had foolishly allowed himself to be persuaded to propose an amendment to a supply motion which, in effect, asked the Conservatives to hand the reins of power back to the Liberal party. This was greeted with shouts of laughter, as it deserved to be, and Diefenbaker seized the chance to make mincemeat of the unfortunate Pearson.

What followed will seem bizarre to anyone unacquainted with the Press Gallery practices of those days and who knows only the adversarial style of journalism prevalent today. As soon as the debate in the House was over, Grant Dexter, who covered Ottawa for the editorial page of the *Winnipeg Free Press,* hurried to Pearson's office to discuss how best to repair the damage done by Diefenbaker. They were soon joined by Bruce Hutchison, who also wrote for the *Free Press* as well as a number of other papers. Hutchison was scheduled to interview Pearson on the CBC that same evening but the three of them agreed that the line of questioning that had been proposed must now be abandoned. Hutchison scribbled new questions on the back of an envelope. They were designed to put the best possible face on the embarrassment the Liberals had just suffered. Then Dexter and Hutchison, accompanied by Blair Fraser of *Maclean's* magazine,

Grant Dexter: A long spoon.

jammed themselves into Pearson's tiny car and, with Pearson at the wheel, drove to the CBC studio. Somehow, Pearson and Hutchison got through their interview.

A generation later, there seems something faintly comic about all this. What on earth, we are inclined to ask, did Dexter and Hutchison, both first-class newspapermen, think they were doing? In this post-Watergate age, it is assumed that it is no part of the media's job to help and support politicians — or, at least, not while they are in Canada. It is still the convention that politicians travelling abroad are, more or less, spared awkward questions from Canadian reporters.

Are we to conclude, then, that the Press Gallery of forty or fifty years ago was filled with flunkeys eager to do the government's bidding? This is certainly not the view of Patrick Brennan whose *Reporting the Nation's Business* is a thoughtful and entertaining study of the journalism of the era. Brennan focuses on a handful of reporters, all of whom were Liberal supporters. They include not only Dexter, Hutchison and Fraser but also Ken Wilson of the *Financial Post* and George Ferguson, editor of the *Montreal Star.* Brennan stresses that they all shared certain passionately-held convictions about the role Canada should play in the world. They believed in freer trade, for instance, and in support for such international bodies as the United Nations and NATO. It happened that these same beliefs were held with equal fervour by many of the senior civil servants — the so-called "mandarins" — in the Departments of Finance and External Affairs and also, with varying degrees of intensity, by the federal cabinet. It would be untrue, in other words, to say that Brennan's five journalists were spokesmen for the Liberal party. It would be more accurate to say that they advocated causes to which the Liberals also gave their blessing.

The obverse of this was that Dexter and the others felt an antipathy amounting to hatred for the Conservative party. The very

thought of the Tories supplanting the Liberals filled them with foreboding. George Drew in particular, with his strident criticism of the "mandarins", was anathema to them. This, no doubt, gave an added impetus to their support for the Liberals.

Not everyone in the Press Gallery felt this way, of course, and some well respected journalists were known to lean to the right. John Bird of Southam's was one of these, for instance, and so was I. Norman Smith of the *Ottawa Journal.* Chief among them — indeed, almost in a class by himself — was the eloquent veteran, Grattan O'Leary, also of the *Ottawa Journal.* Nevertheless, the Tories were not being paranoid when they thought they faced a largely hostile press.

How good was it for Canada that, during more than twenty years, most of the best — and best-known — reporters endorsed the views of the governing party? Or, to come at the question from another angle, is it better when relations between politicians and the media are of the confrontational kind so well set out in Allan Levine's *Scrum Wars* (Dundurn Press, 1993)? There are strong arguments on both sides and the answer is far from clear.

The case for Dexter and his colleagues rests on an assumption that not every historian will grant — namely, that the Liberal governments of those years were, in truth, doing what was best for Canada in the best possible way most of the time. Perhaps this is just another example of the famous Liberal arrogance, but supposing it were true — and the Dexter school certainly believed it was true — then the best and most reliable source of news becomes the framers of Liberal policies, *i.e.* the senior civil servants. As far as those of Dexter's way of thinking were concerned, winning the trust and friendship of the "mandarins" was the professional way of going about their job. An adversarial relationship was simply out of the question.

What resulted was a flood of stories from Ottawa of a quality that had never hitherto been excelled for accuracy, completeness and originality. Ken Wilson broke new ground with his lucid reporting of complex economic issues. Dexter himself, although inclined to be ponderous at times, was unequalled in his knowledge of the inner workings of government. Blair Fraser, in a series of brilliant articles in *Maclean's,* was one of the early voices alerting English-speaking Canada to the new nationalism stirring in Quebec. Viewed from one angle, this was a golden age for journalism.

There was a darker side, of course. A long spoon is needed when supping with politicians and bureaucrats. The danger was not that reporters might be manipulated or intimidated. It is hard to imagine any of Brennan's quintet being either cowed by threats or caving in to pressure. The peril was more subtle and David Hayes has put his finger on it in *Power and Influence* — his book on the *Globe and Mail* — where he writes of reporters of Dexter's ilk being "insulated in ivory towers, writing about their pals". This is harsh but there is some truth in it.

Insulated is the key word. In the congenial company of clever, articulate "mandarins" it is easy to lose touch with reality. That is as true of Ottawa as it is of Washington, London or any other capital. It is possible, for instance, for a reporter to analyze the latest figures on unemployment and draw shrewd deductions from them without really understanding anything of the pain and the humiliation that accompanies the loss of a job. Not every

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Ottawa reporter of that earlier era fell into this trap but some, did, and a bit more scepticism on their part about the rightness of what the government was doing would have supplied the needed perspective and balance.

In any event, those days are gone. Watergate has cast its long shadow and neither reporters nor their readers any longer trust politicians or civil servants. In these circumstances, perhaps all we can expect is a continuation of what Brennan insists on calling "adversarialism" in reporting from Ottawa. There are, indeed, those who would maintain that this is an improvement over the old ways of doing business.

Brennan teaches history at the University of Calgary. His book, which began as a doctoral dissertation, includes an extensive bibliography and comprehensive notes, helpfully headed by the pages to which they refer. I was able to spot only one, very minor error. Alex Hume wrote for the *Ottawa Citizen* and never, I believe, for the *Ottawa Journal*. Grattan O'Leary's first name is wrongly spelled on one page but that is clearly a misprint.

Brennan has a good story to tell and he tells it well. His clear, vigorous prose is often enlivened by a delightful wit. At one point, for instance, he pokes gentle fun at Bruce Hutchison for staying staunchly Liberal despite " mountainous rationalizations" on his part about being objective. The adjective conjures up a picture of Hutchison seated at his typewriter and pounding out a steadily growing pile of "rationalizations". Again, the formidable Grant Dexter is described as "a storehouse of all sorts of delicious political gossip which he was not adverse to sharing for a price" — the price, presumably, being yet more inside information.

Brennan's account of battles fought and ambushes encountered by an earlier generation of reporters can serve as both an inspiration and a warning for today's journalists. The general reader can gain insights into how to assess the news that thunders down on him like an avalanche every day. Quite apart from these considerations, Brennan's book is a good read. ◆

Robert Saunders, a former member of the editorial page of the "Winnipeg Free Press", also served a term with the "Ottawa Journal".

A Costly Victory
At Oswego

●

Mystery at Onion Lake

●

Ernest Lapointe:
Voice of Quebec

The Beaver April/May

Independent Women

By Anne Morton

BRITANNIA'S DAUGHTERS
Women of the British Empire

By Joanna Trollope. Pimlico, London, 1994. 224 pp., illus. $18.00.

Like her famous ancestor, Anthony, Joanna Trollope is a novelist. Under her own name and the name Caroline Harvey she writes novels with an historical setting. In recent years she has also turned to contemporary Britain as the scene for her fiction. The result has been wildly successful and she is now a hugely popular author in Britain.

Britannia's Daughters was first published in 1983 and has recently been re-issued in an attractive, soft-cover format, reasonably priced and with a good selection of illustrations. It is an obvious and sensible attempt to cash in on Trollope's popularity and I hope it succeeds, for this is a book that deserves a wide audience.

Trollope brings to the writing of this history the keen eye and sharp wit familiar to readers of her novels. What reader of *The Choir,* for example, could forget that curiously sinister symbol of class and wealth, the cut glass tumbler of tonic water "heaving with ice and lemon and bubble", handed by the Dean of the cathedral, who married money, to the Labour city councillor?

She brings another of her chief strengths as a novelist, namely, a sympathetic understanding of women's struggle to live life on their own terms. As Anna Bouverie, the rebellious heroine of *The Rector's Wife,* says, when her interest in independence is dismissed as "just this modern women thing":

> It has nothing to do with gender. It's to do with humanity. Do you know what independence means? It means not being subordinate. It means thinking and acting for yourself. It means not depending on anyone else for your sense of value.

Catherine Parr Traill

Britannia's Daughters is about how the Empire in the reign of Victoria offered British women a chance for independence.

The research for the book, in which the author was helped by her sister, Victoria Moger, was based on a wide range of published sources. Novels by writers such as Gaskell, Eliot and Yonge also appear in the bibliography and excellent use is made of them for an understanding of the period. To make a book from other books is an old and honourable tradition and I for one am grateful to an author who will give me the benefit of books I am unlikely to encounter or to read if I did, such as *Down Memory Lane with Some Early Rhodesian Pioneer Women* or *Great Days in New Zealand Nursing.* (Trollope, by the way, clearly has a fondness for unlikely titles, referring with relish to "Mrs. Alec-Tweedie [*sic*], the mistress-supreme of the travel-book title — hers included *Tight Corners of My Adventurous Life, Danish Versus English Buttermaking* and *Through Finland in Carts,* not to mention a chapter thrillingly headed "Painting Alone with a Dozen Nude Blacks (Sudan)").

Reading the book is enormously enjoyable, an experience rather akin to watching one of those amiably cultured British TV series Canadians and Americans follow adoringly when broadcast on PBS. We begin with Queen Victoria dining at Windsor Castle on New Year's Day 1877, happy in the knowledge that half a world away on the Plain of Delhi she was being proclaimed Kaisar-i-Hind, and end by contemplating the tombstone of the great Australian soprano, Nellie Melba. In between, we indulge in a compulsively readable gallop that takes us from African heat to Canadian snow, from ladies who always wore corsets ("even for a tête-à-tête home dinner on the warmest evening [in Nigeria]; there is something about their absence almost as demoralizing as hair in curling pins") to convict women who had no underwear at all.

The book does, however, have a structure. The first chapter sets the stage, filling us in on the Empire and the reasons, commercial, patriotic

and humanitarian, that inspired British women and men to love and serve it. The Empire's particular value for women as a means of escape is then explained. Middle-class women often felt themselves stifled by expectations of how they should live, especially the many "surplus" women for whom there were no husbands. Sarah Drummond, the heroine of Trollope's 1980 novel, *Leaves from the Valley,* views her conventional life in England this way: "I see a long, long dreary tunnel and down it I must walk, day after endless day, on my round of drawing rooms and dining rooms and carriages and shrubberies and church and insupportable pointlessness." Sarah has a happy ending, clearly influenced by her creator's research for *Britannia's Daughters.* She gains independence and self-respect working for Florence Nightingale in the Crimea, dealing with some of the same squalid horrors so gallantly and capably confronted by the real-life Lady Alicia Blackwood.

Florence Nightingale and friends.

If life for middle-class women could be one of stupefying boredom, for women of the working-class it was all too often one of desperate poverty and grindingly hard work to which were added domestic responsibilities made heartbreakingly difficult by their poverty. Poor women, like their better-off sisters, might chose to seek a new life in the wider world of Empire, or might follow their husbands, but for them was reserved the special hell of being transported as prostitutes or criminals. One prison ship housed 27 women in a space 13 by 8 feet. True, it was a long way to Tasmania but such treatment was considered no more than the degraded creatures deserved.

The nine chapters that make up the body of the book are each centred on a theme: pioneer women; governesses, teachers, domestic servants and the female emigration societies which supplied them to the colonies; nurses; the non-British born who served the Empire, such as Mary Curzon, the American heiress and wife of the Viceroy of India, and Canada's own Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire; women who followed their soldier or civil servant husbands to the far corners of the world; travellers and botanists; women transported as prostitutes or criminals; missionaries; women entertainers and women who took advantage of colonial freedom to follow pastimes that would have not been allowed or possible at home, such as Kate Martelli, author of *Tigers I Have Shot.*

Everyone who reads this book will no doubt have her or his own favourites among the women presented. The stars of the age apart, like Florence Nightingale, Mary Kingsley, Flora Shaw and Catherine Parr Traill, my own favourites were as follows: the doughty Scotswoman, Mary Slessor, a missionary in West Africa ("the Lord promised we could take up serpents so why be afraid of leopards?"), the butterfly collector Margaret Fountaine, not to mention her dragoman Khalid Neimy ("And we lived for so much beside mere sexual intercourse ..."), Bridget Widdowson in the Indian Mutiny, the private's wife given 11 mutineers to guard ("She made them sit in a row on the ground and marched up and down before them for hours, brandishing a drawn sword while they cowered docilely at her tramping feet."), the school teacher in Lloydminster writing home, "Have your skirts bound with a deep band of leather. The rose bushes, 6" to 30" high, tear all skirts to ribbons, and these roses are all over the prairie. It is the most glorious country one can imagine. Now I am here I cannot think how anyone ever stays at home in the old country." Best of all, perhaps, were the women in the factory in Tasmania. (A factory was a combination of penitentiary and sweatshop.) In 1843, forced to listen to a sermon from the chaplain, Mr. Bedford, in honour of the visiting Governor, Sir John Franklin, they had spirit to protest as best they could:

These women had had quite

> enough of Mr. Bedford; they were compelled to listen to his long stupid sermons, and knew his character, and that he loved roast turkey and ham with a bottle or two of port wine much better than he loved his Bible, and when he commenced to preach, they with one accord endeavoured to cough him down, and upon the warders proclaiming silence they all with one impulse turned round, raised their clothes and smacked their posteriors with a loud report. The Governor was shocked and the parson was horror struck, and the Aide-de-camp laughed aloud ....

(The most satisfying thing about this tale of mooning the patriarchy is that Sir John Franklin, one of the great heroes of the Victorian age, is in it but it is not about *him* — it is about the women).

Britannia's Daughters is not just a catalogue of uppity women, however. Independence, in Trollope's view, can mean fulfilling conventional ideas of feminine behaviour; what matters is whether or not this is what a woman genuinely wants to do. So she displays fond admiration for Honoria Lawrence, who married a revenue surveyor in India, and found herself devoted to his life of arduous service to the Raj. Lawrence once wrote to her husband. "... it would be my pride and delight to think you were an even better soldier since you had a wife and son. God forbid that I should throw any obstacles in your road."

The distinguished political journalist, Flora Shaw, once broke off her life's "attractive mixture of the intensely domestic and the impressively public." And, if many felt that when, at the age of 51, Flora Shaw became Lady Lugard, she had indeed dwindled into a wife, marriage is what she wanted.

Mary Kingsley spent the first 31 years of her life immersed in domestic cares. When her parents died and her brother went abroad, feeling that "no one had need of [her] anymore", she went to West Africa and there enjoyed a few happy years amid the swamps. She was in England when the Boer War broke out in 1899 and went at once to South Africa, where she nursed Boer prisoners. She never returned to her beloved crocodiles and cannibals, dying of typhoid at the age of 38. Her days in West Africa made her famous as an anthropologist and writer; it was the whole life that made her a heroine.

In the end, what is most pleasing about *Britannia's Daughters* is that all the women in it, whatever their choices and circumstances, are valued by the author. This is hardly surprising, as Trollope has based her career on the belief that women are worth writing for — and writing about.

Anne Morton is a Winnipeg archivist with an interest in women's history.

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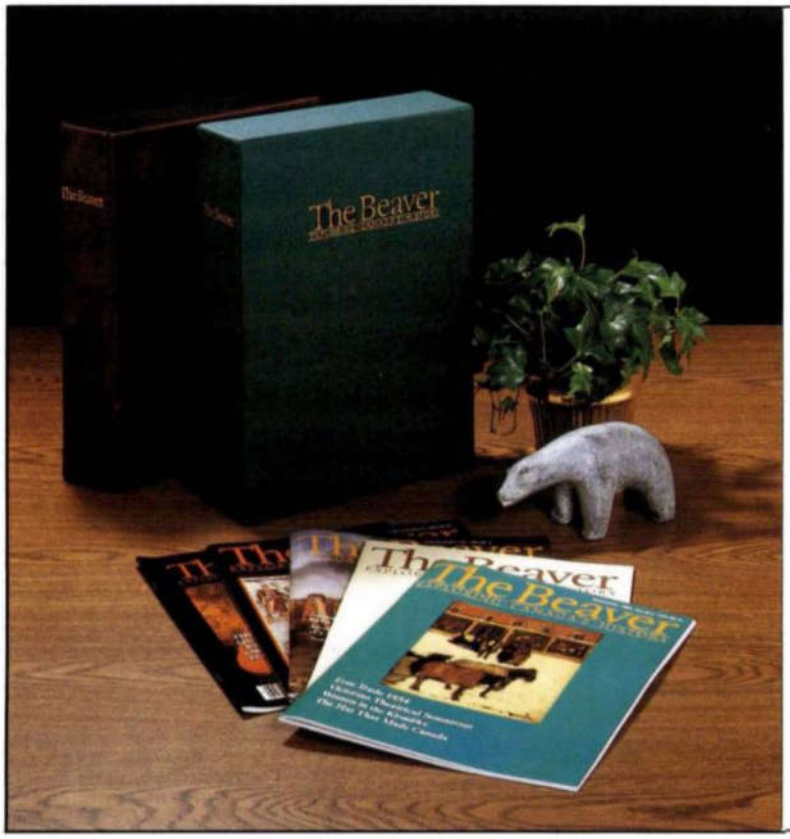

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The Jews of Canada

By Abraham Arnold

TAKING ROOT
The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community

By Gerald Tulchinsky. Lester Publishing Limited, Toronto, 1994. 341 pp., illus. $32.95.

Gerald Tulchinsky's book on the origins of the Canadian Jewish community is a beneficial addition to the growing library of works on the history, demography and sociology of the Jews in Canada. As a definitive work of history on Canada's Jews, from 1760 to the end of the First World War, *Taking Root* represents a considerable advance over previous books covering the same period.

Beginning with an enlightening comparison of U.S. and Canadian Jewry, Tulchinsky also explains the Ashkenazic (Central European) origins of the early Jews in Canada and why they nevertheless followed the Sephardic (Spanish) rituals.

In the same chapter he commits the first of several errors. Tulchinsky repeats the claim of some earlier writers that Ferdinande Jacobs, a Hudson's Bay Company employee from 1732 to 1775, was a Jew. HBC records show no conclusive evidence on this. In fact he asked to be buried in an Anglican cemetery in London where his brother was interred. On the other hand, the story of Esther Brandeau, who was a stowaway on a ship to Quebec in 1738, is clearly documented, yet Tulchinsky suggests her story is "probably apocryphal".

Much more important, of course, is Tulchinsky's revealing account of the development of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, the rise to wealth and prominence of Aaron Hart and his family, and the effects of the American Revolution on the Jews of Quebec.

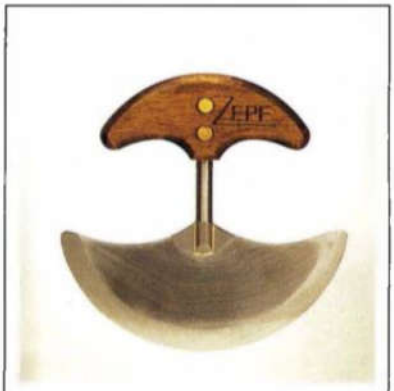
Moving to the 1800s Tulchinsky presents a satisfactory review of Ezekiel Hart's election to and expulsion from the Assembly of Lower Canada (1807-09). He says however that there is no record of any other Jew seeking election during that period. This overlooks Ezekiel Hart's older brother, Moses, who is on the record as a candidate for office two or three times.

More seriously Tulchinsky fails to take proper account of the difficulties encountered by several Jews in taking the oath of office in the 1830s, before and after passage of the act granting Jews the rights and privileges of other subjects in 1832.

In "Montreal Jewry in the era of the De Solas", Tulchinsky comes into his own, incisively interpreting the development of Montreal's Jewish community from the mid-century. Abraham de Sola, from a Sephardic rabbinical family in London, arrived in 1847 formally as the *hazan* (prayer leader) of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation. He became the religious leader of the community, "its rabbi in all but name" and helped to stimulate philanthropic and communal endeavors. The beginning of the de Sola era coincided with the start of a second Jewish congregation since other newcomers, from England, Germany and Poland, wanted the Ashkenazic form of worship.

Tulchinsky's strong suit comes as he discloses the economic divisions that began to develop among Montreal's Jews in the 1860s and 70s between those who prospered in commerce and the new class of poor; pedlars, rag-shop owners and workers in other occupations.

Tulchinsky brings to light aspects of Jewish business history in the 1850s and 60s which were virtually unexplored in the past. Later, he greatly enlarges on the economic history of the Jews, dealing with employers and workers in the clothing industry, the growth of the trade union movement and Jews on both sides in the struggle for better working conditions.



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Another important element is the nineteenth-century treatment of the Jews in the Russian empire and the conditions, beyond *pogroms,* which motivated many to emigrate.

In drawing a broad picture of Jewish settlement, Tulchinsky introduces much valuable detail. And he does particularly well in presenting the results of his own original research. Occasionally however he falls into error on old, established facts. He reports, for example, that David Oppenheimer was "acclaimed Vancouver's first mayor in December 1887". Not so! Brothers David and Isaac Oppenheimer served on the first Vancouver Council in 1887. David was elected mayor the following year and served for four years.

Tulchinsky is also in error on the founding dates of Winnipeg's first two synagogues. Congregation Shaarey Zedek was founded in 1889 and dedicated its first synagogue in 1890. The Rosh Pina Congregation dedicated its first synagogue in 1893. Moreover Rabbi I.I. Kahanovitch, who arrived in Winnipeg in 1906, was not the rabbi of Shaarey Zedek. He served until his death as spiritual leader of the Beth Jacob in Winnipeg's North End. And the Winnipeg Anglo-Jewish weekly is not the *Jewish Western Bulletin.* In fact for many years there were two weeklies in Winnipeg, *The Jewish Post* and *The Western Jewish News.* The first named paper is in Vancouver. As a long-time Winnipeg resident and a former editor of the Vancouver weekly this reviewer could hardly overlook such inaccuracies. But they do not seriously affect Tulchinsky's comprehensive presentation of Jews "taking root" in Canada.

Tulchinsky details the role of the Montreal Jewish elite in the Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Society which became the Baron de Hirsch Institute in 1891. The Institute took a leading part in charity relief, aid to immigrants, education and farm settlement in the West.

Also explained is the role of the *Jewish Times,* the first Jewish newspaper, founded in 1898, partly to defend the Jews against anti-Semitism, resulting from the Dreyfus Case in France. But the *Times* also did not hesitate to criticize conditions in clothing factories operated by Jews.

Tulchinsky explains the education problem faced by the Jews because of Quebec's denominational school system. He exposes the intra-community conflict of the 1890s over education between the Institute and the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation.

Problems of settlement, in the cities and in the homestead territory are also discussed from the immigrants' perspective spanning the turn of the century. The role of immigrant women is also given special attention.

Tulchinsky recounts the early growth of the Zionist movement in Canada from 1900, led by Clarence de Sola, a son of Abraham de Sola. Canadian aspects of anti-Semitism in the early 1900s are also exposed, from Toronto's Goldwin Smith, "Canada's best known Jew-hater" to the Plamondon case in Quebec. Tulchinsky also states that Montreal's *Le Devoir* was not anti-Semitic in its first decade.

A most enlightening concluding element is the story of the conflict between "uptown" and "downtown" in the campaign to develop a Canadian Jewish Congress which ended successfully in 1919. The Congress movement began seriously about 1915 and eventually brought together all sections of the Jewish community from the right to the left. In Montreal those involved included clothing manufacturers and union leaders, who, in 1917 were opponents in a prolonged strike. Lyon Cohen, leader of the clothing owners and grandfather of poet Leonard Cohen, became the first Congress president, and H.M. Calserman, a union leader, became the Congress's general secretary. ◆

Abraham Arnold's new book "Judaism: Myth, Legend, History and Custom, from the Religious to the Secular" was recently published. He also writes regularly on Canadian Jewish history.

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THE PACKET

Letters, Notes and Opinion

The 20th Century Hall of Fame

I regret that I didn't notice in time the deadline of October 15 for submitting nominations to the 20th Century Hall of Fame. I think I'll just send along my musings anyway, for what they're worth. I guess the criteria I should use in making my selections would be the following:

- The candidate would have to have done something distinctive that helped make Canada a better place.
- He (read "she" wherever appropriate) should make a suitable role model for us and our children.
- As to politicians in particular, the appellations "noble-minded" and "giving selfless service" should come to mind.
- The candidates' accomplishments should identify them as Canadians, not just outstanding examples in their field. (Would this exclude Glenn Gould?)

Herewith my nominations:

Politicians: Wilfrid Laurier, Rene Levesque, Pierre Trudeau, Stanley Knowles, Robert Stanfield.

Educator: Hilda Neatby, for her insightful analysis of Canadian educational philosophy and its shortcomings, and her equally perceptive recommendations for improvement.

Sportsman: Jean Beliveau — throughout his sports career and on into his later life, he has carried himself as a gentleman in the best sense of that word; a Canadian with class, noted for public service.

Writers and Artists:

W.L. Morton, for his rare ability to bring Canadian history to life; I have been captivated by his writing about the prairies.

Bruce Hutchison — his books helped to make Canadian history sing in my heart when I was a youth.

Ernest Thompson Seton — as a child I knew no greater love for books than those he wrote of Canada's wilderness.

William Kurelek — his ability in his paintings to portray both his ethnic roots and the uniquely Canadian settings have always evoked in me strong, vivid recollections of my own childhood on the prairies.

Well, the list is longer than permitted. Perhaps it may contribute in a modest way to selection of material for future issues of *The Beaver.* I would be tickled pink.

With all good wishes for your continuing success in this worthy publishing venture.

Nick Neufeld,
New Westminster,
British Columbia.

●

I wish to nominate Dr. Harold Adams Innis for membership in the Hall of Fame.

Without doubt, Dr. Innis was one of our country's greatest original thinkers. His theories on how empires, and even whole civilizations, were shaped by the technology of their communication methods was a unique and brilliant advance in the study of history.

The theories of Dr. Innis will stand the test of time and were totally original to him. Much of what the much vaunted Marshall McLuhan later espoused was largely based on the works of Innis. McLuhan's showmanship and ability to reduce some of Innis' theories to bumpersticker slogans earned him a much wider audience than did the more modest approach of Harold Innis earn for him.

Innis

Seton

As a second nominee, I choose the badly neglected General Sir Arthur Currie. His planning for the greatest victories of the Canadian Army in the Great War, are often overlooked despite the fact that they are well documented. Certainly he should not be left off any list of great Canadians.

George C. Norrie,
Hamilton,
Ontario.

A Matter of Recollection

I share the scepticism of those who question the credibility of Dr. Adam Ford's letter as it relates to the history of baseball in Canada. [*The Beaver,* October/November 1994]. The detail he was able to recall 48 years after the event, far from supporting his case, surely casts more doubt on it. He could not have known in 1838 that baseball was to become a great national sport, so why would he have committed to memory such matters as the exact dimensions of the diamond?

Early in this century golfers tried to reconstruct from their memories how and when their golf clubs had come to be organized in Quebec City, Brantford and Toronto some thirty years earlier, before golf had become a national sport. Their memories proved faulty and too much influenced by their hearts. They put down dates that were recently shown — by an examination of contemporary newspapers — to be anything from one to five years too early.

James Barclay,
Islington, Ontario.

●

Reading J.M. Bumsted's review of Carman Miller's Boer War history *Painting the Map Red* brought back my most memorable recollection of that event. Recalling the stopover of the Third Contingent in our railway city of Moncton, en route to embarkation at Halifax, my mother would tell us of the chuckles she and her Irish-Catholic friends got when an ardent local Protestant clergyman (I think he was Reverend Bowley Green) gave a little speech and prayer to send the cavalrymen on their way. He wound up with these words: *"May God lengthen and strengthen Strathcona's Horse."* To this day, I can share her vision of a nobleman's steed growing longer and stronger as he headed for distant South Africa.

John Edward Belliveau,
Shediac, New Brunswick.

The editor of "The Beaver" welcomes contributions to The Packet. Comments on articles, observations on historic events and fresh information from unpublished sources are particularly encouraged. Letters may be edited for length.

MUSEUM PROFILE

MANITOBA MUSEUM OF MAN AND NATURE

The Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature is one of nine leading Canadian museums offering a reduced admission to members of Canada's National History Society.

Located in Winnipeg, the Museum is the province's largest heritage centre and a Michelin Guide three-star attraction. The Museum's collections reflect the heritage of Manitoba as well as other regions of the world, and seven interpretive galleries explore the history and environment of the province from the arctic coast to the southern grasslands. The Museum is noted for its Urban Gallery, which recreates Winnipeg at the turn of the century; and, the unique replica Nonsuch ketch, whose voyage in 1668 led to the founding of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Museum is now home to the exceptional HBC Museum Collection which the company transferred to the institution last year. The collection comprises over 6000 artifacts representing the history of the company and the development of Northwestern North America. In celebration of its 25th anniversary in 1995, the Museum has mounted a "preview" exhibition of the collection which is now on display.

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- Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec
- New Brunswick Museum, Saint John, New Brunswick

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An Historical Grab-Bag

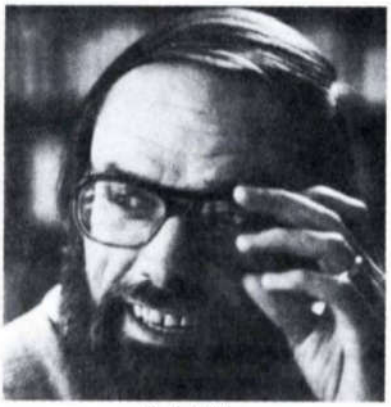
At the beginning of a new year, I want to update some historical matters taken up in previous columns — and anticipate some topics I hope to take up in columns to come.

Fiction and History

A year ago, surveying *Beaver* readers' choices for the best histories of the year, I noted that books by historians frequently dominate the non-fiction side of the Governor General's Literary Awards. This year, however, historians were shut out of the GG nominations, and the winner was an ecological meditation, John Livingston's *Rogue Primate.*

Nevertheless, award-winning historians have been doing just fine on the best-seller lists. Maggie Siggins's sympathetic study of Louis Riel has renewed the controversy over the great rebel's contribution to Canada. Michael Bliss's *Some Honourable Men* offered vigorous opinions on a century's worth of Canadian prime ministers and Canadian politics, while Christina McCall and Stephen Clarkson presented the second thick volume of their study of Pierre Trudeau. Pierre Berton, the model of a bestselling historian, profiled here last summer, had a beautiful picture book *Winter,* that is only indirectly history. I did not see Harold Kalman's *History of Canadian Architecture* (profiled with enthusiasm here two issues back) on the best-seller lists, but many long and respectful reviews testified to its importance — Kalman even turned up on CBC TV News, discussing the Canadian idea of home.

Fiction about history was even more prominent this year than when I wrote a column about novelists and history last year. The Governor General's fiction winner was a novel inspired by doomed explorer John Franklin, Rudy Wiebe's *A Discovery of Strangers.* George Bowering, one of the writers quoted in my column, brought out *Shoot,* his novel of nineteenth-century outlaws in British Columbia. And *Away,* Jane Urquhart's novel of nineteenth-century Ireland and Canada, spent more than a year high on the best-seller list.



Rudy Wiebe

One of the non-fiction nominees on the Governor General's list was a novelist, Sharon Butala. *The Perfection of the Morning: An Apprenticeship in Nature* is not about history, but it is about place, the dryland ranch in southwestern Saskatchewan where Butala has lived for almost twenty years. It's a beautiful piece of writing, an interior search as much as a nature study, yet clearly aware that the end of the era of the prairie farm may be at hand. Still I was struck by how ahistorical was Butala's effort to imagine how people lived in this landscape hundreds or thousands of years ago.

Though she lists some solid historical works among her sources and dedicates the book "to those who knew this land in ancient times," she evidently was not much inspired by the details about those past societies. I once had the privilege of spending several days observing an archaeological project not a hundred miles from Butala's ranch, and in retrospect I'm still awed by the depth of knowledge that endures about native nations on the austere plains. Encountering stone-circle traces of that history, Butala prefers to make an intuitive, rather than an historical, leap into the life of those who made them. She reminded me again of how easy it is for many thoughtful and educated people to live without much history at all. Is that in spite of the riches — or because of the failings — of the historical and archaeological knowledge available to us?

Electronic History

History books may recall 1994 as the year "the information superhighway" went directly from mystery to cliché. But almost accidentally I got an address on that highway this year, and I began to wonder what uses historians are beginning to make of all those computer-and-telecommunication resources. My first venture was not promising. Looking into a history file on one of the Internet "freenets", I encountered loony and disgusting holocaust denial passing itself off as historical "revision". I have not been back.

Still I hear that real historians are using the Internet to post research questions and answers, that genealogists link up their family charts and data, that archive and library catalogues have become instantly available over any distance. History and the computer sounds worth looking

into for a future column. Those working on the highway could let me know their experiences at chrism@educ.lsuc.on.ca (whatever that means).

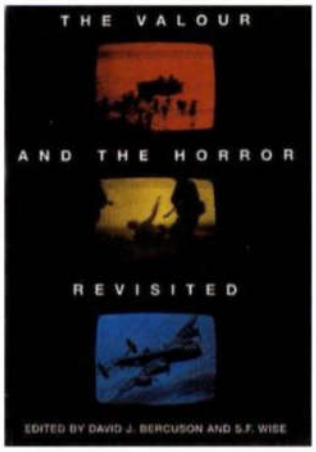
The Search for Robert Sutherland

In the archives recently, I met a young late twentieth-century lawyer who in his spare time (to the extent that Toronto lawyers have spare time!) was researching a young mid-nineteenth-century lawyer named Robert Sutherland. The connection between them is that both are black. Robert Sutherland, who was called to the bar of Canada West in 1855, was probably Canada's first-ever black lawyer, and some mystery attaches to him. He was born in Jamaica about the time slavery was ending, yet he was able to attend Queen's University in Kingston and he became a lawyer without facing the racial harassment Ontario's second black lawyer, Delos Davis, endured thirty years later.

Sadly, Sutherland died young, without family or proteges. But his story highlights the complexities of race and class and culture that are making multiculturalism — and multicultural history — so controversial today. Multiculturalism is big business in history. The federal government has subsidized ethnic history publishing by both the Canadian Historical Association and commercial publishers. Affirmative-action hiring and multicultural studies are both growth fields in university history departments. But the cult of multiculturalism has always had its critics. Most recently, novelist Neil Bissondath's book-length essay *Selling Illusions* charges that it demeans its intended clients and undermines Canadian citizenship. In my next column, I will be looking into multicultural history: both the fine works of history it has produced and the increasingly polarized debate about what it means.

The Military History Wars

Last winter, when I profiled the official historians of DHist, the National Defence Directorate of History, I suggested the controversy sparked by *The Valour and the Horror* might be stirred again when the massive official history of the RCAF in the Second World War appeared. Sure enough, there were



headline stories and angry reviews in the newspapers. Those still interested may wish to know that McGill-Queen's University Press has recently published *The Valour and the Horror Revisited,* a compilation edited by David Bercuson and Syd Wise, two historians critical of the film. And, as if to confirm what fine military history is being written, my mail recently brought *The U-Boat Hunters* by Marc Milner. It's a kind of sequel to his *North Atlantic Run,* his very technical and yet (to me at least) almost unbearably moving study of the convoy battles.

The Ontario Historical Studies Series

Lately I've been reading a thick book called *Professional Gentlemen,* by the husband-and-wife academic team Robert Gidney and Wyn Millar. It is a lovely book at least for those few who are ready for a serious read on the origins of our modern notions of what "professions" and "professionals" mean. It includes some remarkable stories of early doctors, lawyers, and clergymen, and they are not always flattering. Will the medical associations smile to read of the importance of grave-robbing to nineteenth-century anatomical study, as when two medical students were commended for being "fond of the odour of a graveyard and ... most expert in obtaining dissecting material"?

But I mention the book mainly for its brief obituary notice on the series in which it is published, The Ontario Historical Studies Series. The profile of *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography* I wrote in this column a couple of years ago focussed on the struggles to maintain expensive, publicly subsidized historical projects. Happily, the DCB perseveres, with Volume 13 published and #14 on the way, but OHSS was a casualty of deficit-cutting governments.

The OHSS began in a conversation between retired Ontario premier Leslie Frost and philanthropist-publisher Floyd Chalmers. In the 1970s and 1980s, those irresistible

Oliver Mowat

connections soon produced handsome government subsidies for the OHSS series. Its first publications, book-length studies of each premier of Ontario (Frost, who died in 1973, got his in 1990), soon earned a reputation for absolutely stultifying boredom — though in fairness I note the Oliver Mowat biography by

A. Margaret Evans was a Reader's Choice in this column last year.

But OHSS also permitted academic scholars to follow their own volition, and it published some cutting-edge history; David Gagan's *Hopeful Travellers*, a computer-driven analysis of farm families and farm land, a three-volume economic history of how the backwoods frontier of Upper Canada became the industrial powerhouse of Canada, and the spectacularly beautiful full-colour *Ontario's History in Maps*, now a collector's item. The OHSS mandate was almost completed when the NDP government laid it to rest in 1993; the historical community will not see its like for a long time.

Still we need not mourn the state of history. Canadian histories of every imaginable kind crowd bookstore shelves and best-seller lists. You can hardly go to a movie or turn on the television without encountering a "Heritage Minute." *The Beaver* starts its 75th year newly strengthened by the creation of Canada's National History Society. And Canadian history even achieves controversy now and then. I think there will be lots to read and lots for this column to cover. ◆

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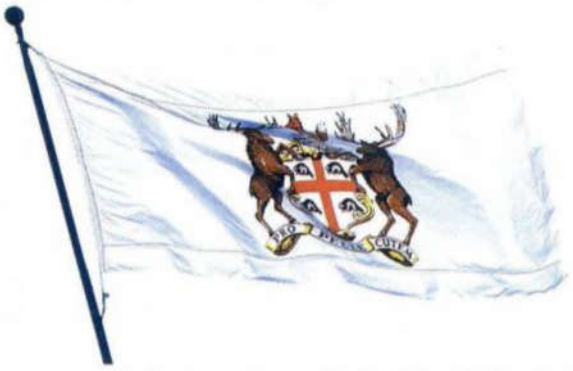
Flags of the Adventurers



Now the familiar "house flag" of the Hudson's Bay Company, the white banner bearing the famous HBC coat-of-arms has a long and dramatic history. It flew over ships of the Company's sailing fleet that left Gravesend for Hudson Bay in 1767 and it continued to identify Company vessels until the late eighteen hundreds. In this century it has been the standard of the HBC Governors and, since the 1970s, the Honourable Company's official flag. Now this fine 3 ft. x 6 ft. flag is available in weather-resistant nylon as a special limited offer to readers of *The Beaver.*

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THE SOCIETY

The Society Board of Directors: back row, left to right Paul-Andre Linteau, William Nobleman, Joe Ghiz, Michael Bliss, Desmond Morton; seated, left to right, Marlene Shore, Shirlee Anne Smith, Rolph Huband, Joe Martin, Tina Loo.

Pierre Berton, distinguished Canadian writer and popular author, receives Canada's National History Society's first annual award "for achievement in popularizing Canadian history" from Rolph Huband, left, Society president.

The sterling silver medal, presented to Pierre Berton, on November 20, 1994, measures 77 millimeters in diameter and 3 millimeters in thickness, with a weight of 143 grams. It was manufactured for the Society by Midas Jewellery Company of Winnipeg.

First Meeting

The first meeting of the full board of Canada's National History Society was held November 20, 1994 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. In selecting the inaugural board, the Society aimed to achieve a number of considerations - regional representation; gender balance; an age range; a balance between professional and lay people, thus reflecting Canada itself. Although this was the first full board meeting, the Society had previous smaller meetings of directors, including one last September where the decision was made to establish an award for popularizing Canadian history.

Award Announced

Canada's National History Society has introduced an award for "distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history" and selected Pierre Berton as the first recipient. The Award was presented to him on November 20, 1994 at a ceremony in the historic Royal York Hotel in Toronto. Mr. Berton consented to having the Award named after him in future years.

In making the presentation, Society President, Rolph Huband said that the only possible choice of a first recipient was Pierre Berton, "journalist, editor , tv star, but most importantly historian... who not only chronicled our history but turned it into best sellers - who put Canadian history on top of the charts." He mentioned that Berton, through his 39 books, had chronicled such diverse and colourful events in Canadian history as the building of the transcontinental railway to, most recently, that" defining Canadian season - winter."

In response, Mr. Berton thanked the Society for its initiative, for selecting him as the first recipient, and for its existence. " I am pleased that this organization now exists and how important it is to the country to focus on its popular history." "Popular history", said Berton, is really narrative history and that means it is storytelling". He said that both journalists and historians record history and that each could learn from the other. "Journalists have to learn the discipline of history before they can call themselves anything and historians have to learn how to tell a story. It is interesting how these groups have come more and more together..."

The Pierre Berton Award consists of three parts: a medal for the recipient; a cheque for $5,000 dollars which the recipient must use for a history project or organization in which the recipient may or may not be directly involved and; a life-time voting membership in the Society with full membership privileges. Recipients must inform the Society within a year of the use of the cash component of the Award.

The Society would be interested in receiving the names of Canadians to be considered for the Pierre Berton Award. Names may be submitted to, or further information may be obtained from, the General Manager of the Society.

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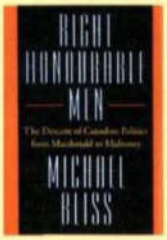

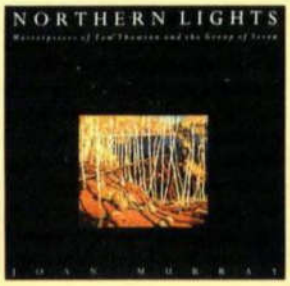

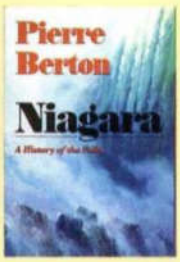

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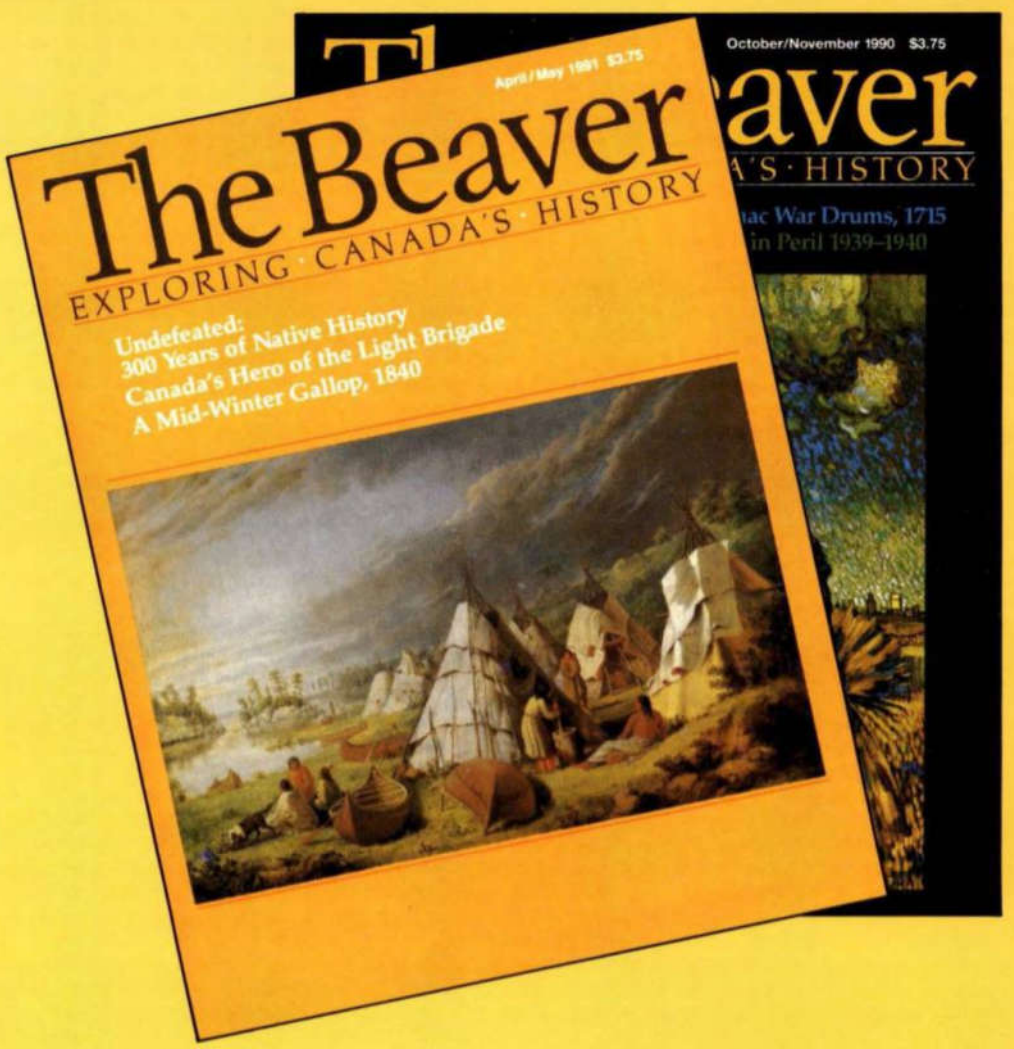

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